



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

WHITWORTH

THE

HISTORY

SPENNYMOOR

OF THE URBAN DISTRICT

OF

TUDHOE

SPENNYMOOR

BY

TUDHOE GRANGE

JAMES J. DODD

Br 5233.125

Harvard College Library

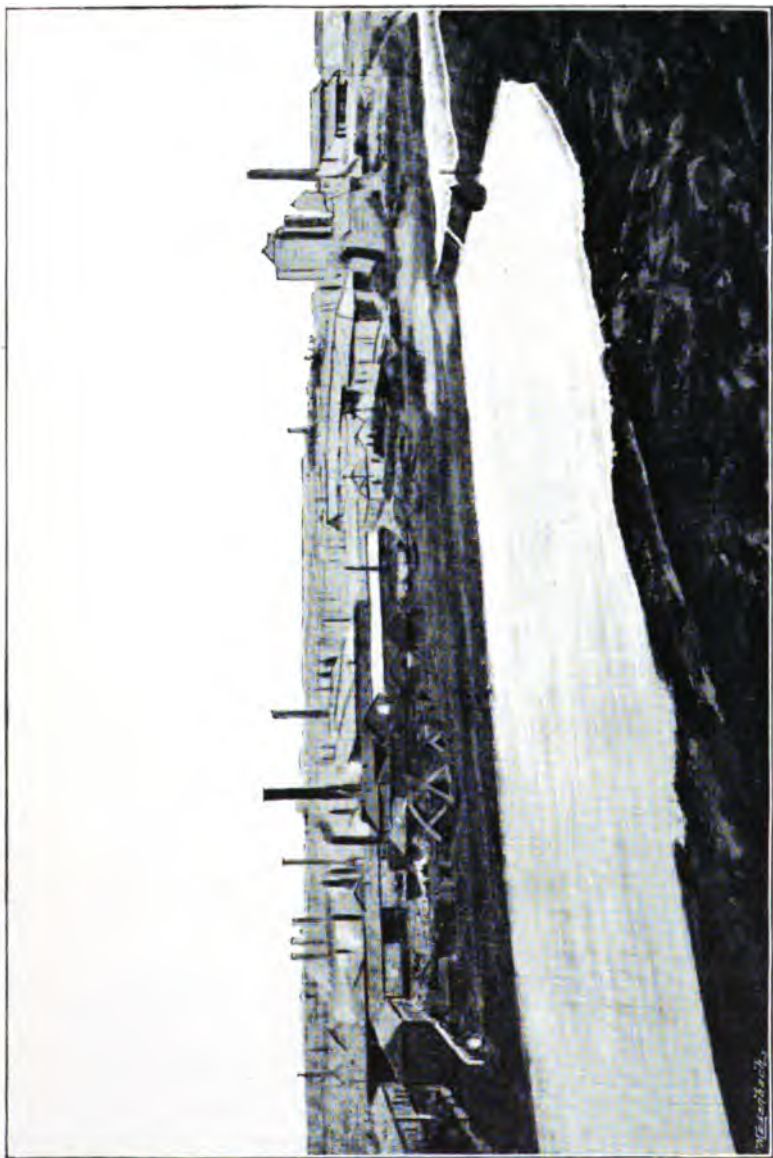


FROM THE BEQUEST OF

FRANCIS BROWN HAYES

(Class of 1839)

This fund is \$10,000 and its income is to be used
"For the purchase of books for the Library"



TUDHOE IRON WORKS.

THE HISTORY
OF THE URBAN DISTRICT
OF SPENNYMOOR

WITH OCCASIONAL REFERENCES TO

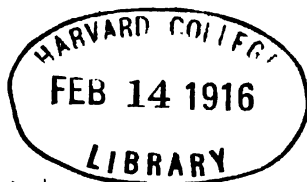
KIRK MERRINGTON, MIDDLESTONE, WESTERTON, BYERS GREEN,
PAGE BANK, CROXDALE, AND FERRYHILL,

BY

JAMES J. DODD.

SPENNYMOOR:
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.
1897.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Br 5233.125



Hayes fund

TO THE BOYS OF SPENNYMOOR,
WITH WHOM THE FUTURE OF THE TOWN
SO GREATLY DEPENDS,
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

PREFACE.



SOME months ago I happened to read somewhere that it is the bounden duty of someone in every locality to write the history of the locality, so that those who come after may learn to be loyal to the community into which they are born. If I have been somewhat presumptuous in taking this duty upon my own shoulders so soon after my coming to the town, it may possibly be accepted as a plea in extenuation that there was little likelihood of anyone else attempting it. This book has not been written to make money, nor from its necessarily limited circulation can there be any great hope that it will ever repay its cost, but it has been a pleasant pastime, and the necessary research for it has opened out a number of items of information that have never before been published to the general reader. It cannot be pretended that the book is perfect: already a few unimportant errors have been discovered, and it is only to be expected that directly it gets into the hands of the public they will find

plenty more. Nevertheless it must be admitted that in the main it is an accurate and impartial record, and whatever may be its blemishes I am quite content to trust it in its present form to the good nature of the public. The writing of modern history is a difficult, not to say dangerous, operation. To sift the truth from error is never an easy task, particularly when the memories of living people fail to agree, and to tell the truth out boldly is a danger that only thick-skinned people may brave. This book contains a number of truths told with no uncertain sound, and if they gain me but one single friend I am willing to take the risk of a plentiful crop of enemies.

The only chapter for which any apology is needed is that with which the book concludes, although it is not so out-of-place as at first sight would be supposed. Originally it was my intention to give a complete list of the local footpaths, specifying particularly those of ancient origin that have been stopped within living memory, but these are so clearly marked upon the map of the district that there can be no possible difficulty in tracing them. My knowledge of the locality is scarcely sufficient to justify me in maintaining that every path coloured upon the map is a public path; nevertheless, there is good reason for colouring every one of them. So far as I am aware there are only

five of the disputed, but undoubtedly ancient, foot-paths that are worth fighting for; the path from Ferryhill to Low Spennymoor by way of High Hill House, the path from Villiers Street across Oxclose Farm to the bridle road, the path in connection with it leading past Woodhouse Farm to the river (the shortest way from Spennymoor to the river) the path by the river side, and the lovely woodland path from Tudhoe Mill to the back of Whitworth Hall that formerly crossed the Page Bank Railway by two stiles close to Woodhouse Farm. These Whitworth paths are of inestimable value to Spennymoor, and it is greatly to be regretted that for the sake of a few partridges they should ever have been stolen from the public; in fact, it would be a beautiful tribute to this present year of Jubilee if Mrs. Shafto would order them all to be thrown open again. It can scarcely be conceived that the closing was ever effected with her own knowledge and sanction: these things are usually the work of diligent land agents who esteem it a part of their duty to rob the public in the interests of their employers. One of the most barefaced footpath thefts that has ever been attempted in this part of the country was committed a few years ago on the Whitworth estate, when the bridle road near Tudhoe Mill, a broad and ancient highway, paved with stones, the oldest in the district, was stubbed up and planted

with trees. The theft was too outrageous for human endurance; nevertheless, it continued until the present Urban Council came into power, and the claim for its restoration was one of the earliest acts of the new authority. The claim has been sullenly conceded because there was no help for it, but the road has since been rendered practically impassable by the vicious employment of barbed wire and other offensive obstructions, so that the victory of the public is not yet complete. It is time that the people of England were awakened to what is happening. Year by year their footpaths are being taken away from them, and the day is fast approaching when the healthful recreation of a stroll by wood or stream, or through the green meadows, or across the springy turf of a breezy down will become a mere memory of the past. The children will then have to be taught as part of the ancient history of their country that there was once a period when the public were *not* restricted in the interests of farmers and sportsmen to the paths by the side of the dusty high roads.

At one time I thought of giving in this preface the names of all who have aided me in my task, but they are so many that I dare not commence to enumerate them lest by any chance someone might be omitted. At the same time I cannot help saying that my book would have been very dull reading had it not been for Mrs. Duncombe Shafto,

Canon Greenwell, the distinguished antiquarian, Mr. Joseph Botcherby, and Mr. Robert Richley, and I am particularly indebted to Messrs. F. Warne and Co. for permission to make copious extracts from Charles Waterton's autobiography, to Mr. White for his Tudhoe Colliery picture, to Mr. Charles Burdon for his charming photographs of Whitworth Church, Merrington Church, and Brancepeth Castle, to Mr. William Cecil Robinson for his faithful copies of the sketches by Mr. Bungay selected by me for reproduction, to Mr. Osguthorpe for his pictures of Bonnie Bobbie Shafto and the Blast furnaces, to Mr. Yeoman, of Barnard Castle, for his photographs of Tudhoe Grange, Market, the High Street, and St. Paul's, also to the published lecture by Mr. Tate, entitled "The Early History of Spennymoor," in fact I may say that it was this little pamphlet that first stimulated me to put together the work I now lay submissively before the public for their criticism and enjoyment.

SPENNYMOOR, JULY, 1897.

CONTENTS.

THE MONASTERY AT CHURCH MERRINGTON.—The Urban District, its Boundaries and Divisions: The Ancient Moor, its extent: The Secular Priests: William the Conqueror: The Country Laid Waste: Wild beasts: The Brawn of Brancepeth: Its Destruction by Hodge of Ferryhill: His Grave Cover at Merrington: Richard III. at Brancepeth: Cleves Cross: “Ye Fiendis in Deep Croixdale”: The Forged Charters: The Wily Monks: The Genuine Charters: Bishop William de St. Carilef: The Benedictine Monastery: Cumyn’s Rebellion: The Church Besieged: A Fierce Fight: Cumyn’s Submission 1

THE LORDS OF WHITWORTH.—Thomas de Acle: The Village of Whitworth: Whitworth Church: Thomas de Qwyte worthe: The Effigies in the Churchyard: The Wood Vue Fish Pond: Tudhoe: Sir Hugh Gubyon: Marle: The Old Mill Race: Spennymoor: Roadside Strips: Common Land: Early Enclosures: Wormdene: Uddersake 11

THE BATTLE OF NEVILLE’S CROSS.—Edward III.: The King of Scots: The Invasion: The English Forces at Merrington: Beaurepaire: The Movement to Ferryhill: The Foraging Party: The Chase to Sunderland Bridge: Butcher Race: The Prior’s Vision: The Battle: The Holy Corporax Cloth: The Monks in the Cathedral: John Graham: The High Steward’s Movement: The Last Stand: King David a Prisoner: A Terrible Slaughter: The Cross: The Boys’ Tradition 19

SPENNYNGMORE AND TWDDOWE.—Coal: The Family of Whitworth: The Nevilles: Whitworth Park: The Prince-Bishops: The Common Rights: Yorkesfelde: The Northern Rebellion: The Duke of Norfolk’s Plot: Uprising of the Catholics: The Earl of Westmoreland Attainted: Queen Elizabeth, owner of Whitworth and Tudhoe: Gerard Salvin, his Penance: Croxdale: The Raid of the Redesquair: Henry Schaftan: John Foliot: The Array on Spennymoor: Sales by the Crown: The Minerals: The Dead Man’s Grave: Charles I. at Whitworth: The Conflict with the Parliament: The Skirmish at Darlington: Marston Moor: Gerard and Francis Salvin Slain: Croxdale Chapel: The Puritan Conventicles: The “Vicar of Bray”: Marriages by Soldiers: William Baxter: Six-bottle Mark: A Truthful Epitaph: Sir Robert Shafto: Division of the Moor: Spennymoor House: Burn Hall 25

THE MURDER AT BRASS' FARM.—A Contemporary Record : Details of the Murder : The Arrest : The Murderer Gibbeted : A Gruesome Story : The Drama : A Remedy for Toothache : The Monument in the Churchyard : Willy Lynn : "Perfectly Blast Ye : " The Stolen Tombstone : The Rev. John Tyson : A Parson's Appetite : The Parson and the Clerk : Tithing Day : The Vicar and the Goslings	39
KIRK MERRINGTON : The Churchyard : A Quaint Monument : The Grave Covers : The Communion Table : The Communion Plate : Fruits of the Churchyard : A Trench Full of Bones : The Registers : The Bakehouse : The Collections : The Information of John Douthwaite : Bishop Cosin : The Churchwardens' Bonfire : The Entrance Grating : A Ghost Story : Kissing the Bride : Ad Pilam : Leyrwit : Prosperous Times	48
BONNIE BOBBIE SHAFTO.—The Shaftos : Bonnie Bobbie : The Song : His Portrait : The Old Coaching Days : The Posting-house at Rushyford : The Embankment at Ferryhill : Highwaymen ; Toll Gates : The Races : The Pitmen : Their Holiday Costume : The Sword Dancers : Their Verses : Bare Knees	56
CHARLES WATERTON.—Mr. Storey's School : His Two Wigs : Bryan Salvin : An Adventure : The Hungry Refugees : The Publican's Mare : Mr. Storey's Pets : Pasche Eggs : Jarping : The "Guisse" : The Tudhoe Mouse : The Black Horse : Low Thompson : The Song of the "White Hare" : Joe Bowron : Riding a Cow : A Water Adventure : The Woods at Tudhoe : Andrew Mills' Stob : The Death of Charles Waterton : Carling Sunday : Dr. Lingard : The Douai Seminary ; The Reign of Terror : The Refugees at Tudhoe : Ushaw College : Mr. Simpson's School : Lovers' Lane : The Tudhoe Home	64
THE TUDHOE GHOSTS.—The Green Lady : Tudhoe Old Hall : Gruesome Legends : The Panelled Rooms : A Sporting Parson : The Bowling Green : The Old Chapel : The Ducking Stool : The Blasted Oak : Spurious Ghosts : The Nicky-nack Ghost : Caught in His Own Trap : A Terrible Adventure : The Tudhoe Colliery Ghost	79
TUDHOE VILLAGE.—The Old Inns : The Rev. J. H. Blunt : A Visitation : The Ford : The School House : The Old Pensioner : Jacky Lister : His Fame : Corporal Punishment : Monitors : Open-air Lessons : Barring-out Day : A Half-holiday : A Lesson in Grammar : Penmanship : The Death of Mr. Lister : His Funeral : Tudhoe Mill : The Tudhoe Freeholds : A Tudhoe Centenarian : Tudhoe Flower Show : Tudhoe Football Club	88

WHITWORTH. —The Church : The Old Chapel : The Restoration : The Rev. Chas. Carr : The Shafto Vault : A Coffin Upright : The Lady of the Hundred Years : Whitworth Hall : The Fire : The Present Hall : The Library : A Liberal House : A Practical Joke : Lord Rosebery at Whitworth : A Costly Election : Chairing the Member : Family Portraits : Lord Brougham : The Park : The Famous Trees : Newtown : Ghosts at Whitworth : The Cottage : The Vicarage : Bishop Gray	99
WHITWORTH COLLIERY. —Spennymoor in 1834 : A Public Institution : The Clarence Railway : Merrington Colliery : Whitworth Colliery : Mr. Reay : The Rock Colliery : Jerusalem : The Pit People : Their Ovens : Getting in Coal : The " Good Old Times " : The Donkey Races : A Racing Story : Binding Days : Long Hours : Droppy-Candle : The Tyup : The Cock Hunt : The Guisers : Their Performance	109
THE IRONWORKS. —Geldard's : Dirty Matt : Willy Dodds : Coulsons' : The Dry Bread Works : The Great Works : Charles Attwood : His Discovery : The Bessemer Process : The Bessemer Plant : The Blast Furnaces : The Siemens-Martin Furnaces : Page Bank Colliery : The Fire : A Local Hero : A Marvellous Escape	122
THE BIRTH OF SPENNYMOOR. —The Whitworth Rows : Katie Willey : Joseph Walker : Tommy Thew : Sampson Dixon : Johnnie's Row : Thomas Byers : Tommy Dakers : The High Street : Fish Prudhoe : The Penny Pie-man : Washer Tommy : Jemmy Matson : Tommy the Baker : Carrick of the " Lord Raglan " : Thomas Archer : Mrs. Redford : Volti Robinson : A Race at Midnight : Dr. Hawks : The Volunteer Movement : Miss Osborne's School : The Old Postman : Joll Vasey : The Market Train : A Tedious Journey : The Children's Playground : The Great Horse Story : Robert Dodds : Barbara French : The Bridge over the Jordan : A Solitary Liberal : The Reform Riots : A Lively Election : George Maw : An Election Trick	131
THE GROWTH OF SPENNYMOOR. —The Whitworth Strike : The Evictions : The Jerry Builders : Robert Prudhoe : George Stratton : Striking a Bargain : A Valuable Strip : The Local Board : The Local Elections : Dead Men's Votes : Electioneering Tactics : The Water Carriers : Water Willie : The Water Supply : A Water Famine : The Waskerley Water	145
TUDHOE GRANGE. —The Salvin Estate : David Syme : The Penny Gill : Mr. Dyson : William Green : Cuthbert Gardiner : The Brewery : The Blocks :	

The Spennymoor Market : The Tudhoe Grange Market : The Gas Company :
 The Meetings of the Local Board : The Revolt of the Members : The Death
 of George Stratton : The Railway Blunder : The Old Station : An Excursion
 to Scarborough : Long Watson 155

PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT.—The Mechanics' Institute : The Dancing
 Rooms : Collet's Booth : A Snowstorm : Hunter's Booth : The Wild Man :
 The Harmonic Society : The Town Hall : The Musical Society : The Cam-
 bridge Theatre : The New Heating Apparatus : A Sensational Play : The
 Central Hall : The Old Folks' Christmas Dinner : The Victoria Hall : The
 Freemasons' Hall : The Parochial Hall : The Temperance Hall . . . 169

CHURCHES AND CHAPELS.—St. Paul's : Its Beautiful Window : The
 Vicarage : The Evaporating Wine : Mrs. Carr : Mr. Gaskill : Shavey Stick
 Richardson : A Ritualistic Curate : An Evangelical Butcher : Mr. Blackburn :
 The Old Glory Shop : The Presbyterian Church : Tudhoe Colliery : The
 Colliery Houses : The Parish of Tudhoe : Holy Innocent's Church : The
 Nonconformists : St. Charles' Church : The Wesleyan Chapels : The Hedley
 Hall : A Sermon to Teetotallers : St. Andrew's Church : The New Chapel :
 The New Altar : St. Andrew's Hall 177

THE GOOD TIMES.—The Explanation : The Pays : The Milk Strike : The
 Strike Against the Butchers : The Women's Meetings : An Avalanche of
 Umbrellas : A Good Speculation : The Rival Newspapers : The Mischief of
 too much Money : The Murder of Joseph Wain : The Whitworth Racecourse
 Company : The Old Races : " Bothwell's Year " : The old North-Eastern :
 A Terrible Collapse : The Present Races : The Store : A Marvellous
 Growth : Its Value During the Strike : Some Significant Figures : The
 Tudhoe Store 188

THE EXPLOSION AT TUDHOE COLLIERY.—The Bad Times : Dean
 Bridge laid in : General Depression : The Explosion Prophesied : The Disaster :
 A Perilous Descent : The Exploration : Preparations for the Dead : The Death
 of William White : Recovery of the Bodies : The Roll of the Dead : The Roll
 of the Rescued : The Funerals : Bishop Lightfoot's Address : The Cost to the
 Company : The Monument 197

THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOSION.—Description of the Plan : The Hett
 Whin Dyke : The Result of the Inquiry : The Three Theories : The Shot :
 Coal Dust : The Fall of Stone : The Set : Contradictory Appearances : The
 Moral 207

CONTENTS.

XV

THE SCHOOLS AND THE PARK : The Spennymoor National School : The Wesleyan Schools : The Tudhoe National School : The Catholic School : The School Board : The Co-operative Governess : The Need for Manual Training : Technical Instruction Classes : The Volunteers : The Park : The Children's Recreation Ground	215
THE EXTENSION OF THE IRONWORKS.—The Strike of 1892 : The Concerts at St. Andrew's Hall : Mr. Hollis : The Extensions : The Cogging Mill : The Largest Plate Mill in Europe : The New Shears : The New Gas Producers : The New Furnaces : Ingenious Contrivances : The Weardale Company : Its Operations : Its Wages Bill	222
THE AMALGAMATION.—The Progress of Spennymoor : The Decay of Tudhoe Grange : The County Council Inquiry : The Amalgamation : Alderman Wraith : The First-fruits : Work for the Future : The Social Needs of the People : The Future of Spennymoor	227
NOTABLE PERSONS.—Charles Waterton : Dr. Lingard : The Rev. J. H. Blunt : William Wright : Robert Surtees : The Curate's Cow : The Curate's Suicide : Lord Chancellor Eldon : Dr. O'Hanlon : Dr. Heffernan : Mary Ann Cotton : Dr. McFarlane : George Stratton : Thomas John Bungay : James Thompson Hedley : Edward Boyle : " Lord " Thomas Williamson : Billy	232
THE SIGHTS OF SPENNYMOOR.—The Tudhoe Ironworks : The Blast Furnaces : The Steelworks : The Soaking Pits : The Cogging Mill : The New Furnaces : The Plate Mills : The Shears : The Test House : The Nasmyth Hammer : The Bar Mills : The Foundry : The Mountains of Spennymoor : The Park : The Collieries : Woodland Scenery : The Country Walks : A Lesson of Contentment : Merrington Tower : The View from the Summit	243
THE CHARITIES OF SPENNYMOOR.—A Miserable Record : Attwood's Charity : Brabant's Dole : Dobbinson's Charity : Wilson's Charity : The Merrington Charities : The Ferryhill Charities	251
A NOTE AS TO PUBLIC FOOTPATHS.—Dedication, express and implied : The Duty of the Local Councils : How to Fight a Footpath Case : The Risks of Loss : Legitimate Warfare : The Law of Trespass	254

ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE.
✓FRONTISPIECE—TUDHOE IRONWORKS . . .	I
✓MAP OF THE DISTRICT	16
✓WHITWORTH CHURCH	26
✓BRANCEPETH CASTLE	34
✓WHITWORTH HALL	49
✓MERRINGTON CHURCH	56
✓BONNIE BOBBIE	72
✓TUDHOE VILLAGE	92
✓JOHN LISTER AND SOME OF HIS SCHOLARS	106
✓WHITWORTH PARK	125
✓CHARLES ATTWOOD	127
✓THE BLAST FURNACES	136
✓SPENNYMOOR HIGH STREET	155
✓TUDHOE GRANGE MARKET	166
✓THE OLD STATION	177
✓ST. PAUL'S	200
✓THE EXPLOSION—BRINGING OUT THE BODIES	207
✓MAP OF SEAM—SHEWING POSITION OF BODIES .	222
— THE COGGING MILL	224
✓MR. HOLLIS	226
✓THE LARGEST PLATE MILL IN EUROPE .	244
✓LIFTING AN INGOT	246
✓THE SHEARS OF THE COGGING MILL .	

THE MONASTERY AT CHURCH MERRINGTON.



THE Urban District of Spennymoor comprises the district of the old Local Board, the parishes of Tudhoe and Tudhoe Grange, the district of Low Spennymoor, and a portion of the parish of Whitworth. The boundary line commences in the middle of the Page Bank Bridge, and travels along the western side of Whitworth Lane, and along the road to Merrington as far as the old foundry. Then it turns westward, leaving out the triangular enclosure at the Four Lane Ends, and proceeds back again towards Merrington as far as the Binchester Railway, taking in the Rock Colliery on the way. Then it turns to the north-east, following the Binchester mineral line, and ultimately the Ferryhill line as far as the Ferryhill Bridge. From there it runs due north towards Croxdale, on the eastern side of the road, but leaves the North road a little beyond Butcher Race. Nevertheless, it still runs parallel to

B

the north road as far as Nicky Nack, and follows the Nicky Nack beck to the river. From this point it runs in the centre of the river to Page Bank, but takes in the whole of the river between Brancepeth Ford and the Stepping Stones. For local purposes the district is divided into three Wards, viz., Spennymoor proper, Tudhoe (including Whitworth) and Low Spennymoor. For Poor Law purposes, Whitworth and Spennymoor are in the Auckland Union, Tudhoe in the Durham Union, and Low Spennymoor in the Sedgfield Union. For Parliamentary, Police, and County Court purposes, Whitworth, Spennymoor, and Merrington Lane are united in the Bishop Auckland District, while Tudhoe is in the Durham District.

Singular to say, the parent of the whole district, Church Merrington, has been left outside the boundary of the urban area.

The ancient history of Spennymoor is, to a great extent, the history of Church Merrington, so that although Merrington is outside the boundary, it cannot be excluded from the history of Spennymoor. Spennymoor itself was formerly an ancient waste or common, stretching, from the foot of Westerton Hill to Sunderland Bridge, and bounded by the enclosed estates of West Merrington (Westerton), Mid Merrington (Middlestone), East Merrington (Church Merrington), Ferryhill, Hett, and Croxdale

on the one side, and Byers Green, Old Park, Whitworth, and Tudhoe on the other. The Merringtons must have been enclosed in Anglo-Saxon times, the last syllable, 'ton,' being one of the Anglo-Saxon terms for an enclosure or manor. These three villages became very early the property of the Church of St. Cuthbert at Durham, and at the time of the Norman Conquest there was a monastery at Church Merrington, presided over by Secular priests—that is to say, priests who had not taken upon themselves monastic vows of poverty and celibacy.

When William the Conqueror first invaded England his name was little known in this part of the country, and the events on the South Coast were of small interest to the border people of Northumbria. They were accustomed to being continually on the defensive, owing to the frequent attacks upon them of Danes and Picts, and when, in 1069, William sent a band of Norman knights to Durham to enforce his authority, they simply annihilated them. This aroused the terrible anger of the Conqueror, the country was laid waste, and the estates of the Saxon nobility were distributed amongst his own beggarly following. The district around Durham suffered very badly indeed. This is evidenced by the prevalence of place names indicating the abundance of wild animals that roamed unrestrained over the locality. They must have been a source of great terror to the

inhabitants, and in various districts of the county there are legends of the destruction wrought by them. Among the fiercest were the wild boars, and the legends of Pollard's Lands and Hodge of Fery still testify that at this period wild boars were common in the county. Fery is now Ferry-on-the-Hill, and the Boar or Brawn of Brancepeth (Brawn's Path) was a formidable beast that made his lair on Brandon Hill, and walked the forest in ancient undisputed sovereignty. The marshy and then woody vale extending from Croxdale to Ferry Wood, by Cleves Cross Farm, was one of the boar's favourite haunts, affording roots and beech mast in abundance. Neither the knights of Brancepeth nor the monks of Merrington were able to get rid of him.

He feared not ye loute with hys staffe,
Ne yet for ye knyghte in his mayle;
He cared ne more for ye monke with his boke,
Than ye fiendis in depe Croixdale.
Then out spake Hodge yt wyghte soe bolde,
Yt wous on Fery hye;
And he hathe sworne by Seynct Cudberte hys rode,
Yt thys horride brawne shall dye;
And he hathe dygged a depe, depe pit,
And strewed it with braunches so grene.

And in the result the gallant brute came trotting on his onward path, and, seeing the passage barred up, rushed headlong on the vile pitfall, where he sank right down, and was stabbed by Hodge with a sword.

The story is not improbable, for it is certain that so late as the time of Richard III. the district was infested with wild boars. One of the principal pleasures of that hateful monarch, prior to his accession to the throne, was to hunt the wild boar at Brancepeth, an estate then belonging to the Nevilles, who were relations of his mother. According to tradition, the rustic champion of Cleves Cross sleeps in Merrington Churchyard. At any rate there is a coffin-shaped stone at Merrington rudely sculptured with a sword and spade on each side of a cross, and seeing that the sword and the spade were the instruments of his famous victory, it needs a very slight stretch of imagination to identify this stone as the actual tombstone of Hodge of Fery.

Some years ago the farmer at Cleves Cross discovered on the farm a stone, apparently the remnant of a cross erected to commemorate the victory, and in 1867, whilst some repairs to the stackyard were in progress, a deep hole was discovered, and the people of Ferryhill are quite settled in their minds that this is the identical pit into which the boar was decoyed. There is an old charter in the Treasury of the Dean and Chapter bearing the seals of Roger de Feri and his daughter. The seal of the father has the device of a boar, and that of the daughter has upon it the head of a boar.

The "fiendis in depe Croixdale" were supposed

to inhabit the romantic dell forming the channel of the small rivulet that runs round Croixdale Hall—one of the loveliest spots in the County. The dell is so deep and narrow that the sun's rays are excluded nearly throughout the year, and this circumstance gave rise in ancient times to the idea that it was the abode of evil spirits, which probably gained credit from its being the resort of robbers and other lawless persons. To banish the infernal inhabitants a Cross was erected, and Croixdale became the name of the adjacent lands.

The earliest reference to Merrington of which any record has been preserved bears the date of 1082, this being the date of a charter supposed to have been given by the second Norman Bishop of Durham, William de Saint Carilef, to the Priory of Durham. The charter itself is a forgery of very early date, but there can be little doubt that it represents a transaction that actually occurred at the date assigned to it. The story of the forged charters of Durham is of great interest. Up to recent times it was never suspected that they were other than genuine, but the attention of Canon Greenwell was drawn to an inconsistency in one of them, and he set to work with great ingenuity, and discovered that the documents were undoubtedly forgeries, but of a very early date, probably the first quarter of the twelfth century. The principal

evidence of the forgery is the fact that some of the parties who appear to have signed the charters were dead at the date when the charters pretend to have been executed. There are many other evidences, but this is the most striking. It appears that at one time there was a good deal of friction between the Bishop and the Prior of Durham, the Bishop claiming to exercise rights over the possessions of the Priory for which he had little justification, beyond the fact that at the date of the original charter by Bishop William de Saint Carilef, the Bishop and the Prior were so entirely in accord that the Prior would never for one moment have thought of disputing the right of the Bishop to take back all that he had given. The monks appear to have lost their original charters, and so they resorted to the pious fraud of manufacturing a few, nor would anyone greatly blame them, seeing that they had the best of reasons for believing themselves entitled to the possessions to which they laid claim. At this period of the country's history "might" was generally "right," and, whenever a new king came to the throne, the people never felt secure in their privileges until their charters were confirmed anew. This was particularly the case with the great Magna Charta, which was confirmed over and over again. The monks of Durham, not content with the charter of 1082, went in for a second one in 1084, and a third

in 1093, each one confirming (among many other possessions) the Manor of Maerintune to the Priory of Durham, but of these charters not one is genuine. The earliest apparently genuine charter in the Treasury of the Dean and Chapter is one of Henry the Second, which confirms the Church of St. John with its villages Merinton and the other Merinton (Westerton) to the Prior, and there is still another charter of King John dated 2nd February, 1203, in which Merrington appears as Merigton. The transformation of the name throughout this period of 120 years is very interesting. The earliest reference to it as "Kyrke" Merrington appears in a document dated 1331.

Bishop William de Saint Carilef was a remarkable man. He had been brought up a Secular priest, but in later years he joined the Benedictine order, and when he came from the Abbey of Saint Vincentius to the Bishopric of Durham, he was so inclined to the discipline of the monastic rule, that within three years of his accession to the See he procured an authority from Pope Gregory, and, producing it to the Conqueror and Archbishop Lanfranc, received their sanction to the establishment of a Benedictine monastery at Durham.

This resulted in the expulsion of the Secular priests who refused to conform to the new system, and so it may be accepted as a definite fact that

in 1083 a branch of the Benedictine monastery was established at Merrington. Bishop de Saint Carilef will be remembered for all time as the founder of the grand Cathedral at Durham.

St. John's Church at Merrington was re-built in 1849, but as the ancient plan appears to have been carefully conformed to, it may be taken for granted that from the time of its foundation it possessed the high tower that forms so conspicuous a landmark throughout the county of Durham. Its peculiar value as a point of observation was turned to account about 1144 by the nephew of Bishop Cumyn. Cumyn was a priest who, on the death of the Bishop, had usurped the See of Durham, with the approval of King Stephen, himself a usurper, and of his queen Matilda. The valiant knights of the county, stirred up by the monks of Durham, rose up in arms against the intruder, and the story of the siege of Merrington is best told in the words of the old Chronicler:—"On the eve of the Assumption of the Virgin, William (Cumyn) gathered together his men at the chapel of St. John (of Merrington), distant about five leagues from Durham, and began to turn the same church into a castle. Three Barons of the Bishopric, Roger de Coismers, Ganfrid Escoland, and Bertram de Bulemer, understanding of this sacrilege, and preferring death to the profanation of God's altar, collecting what force they hastily might

proceeded to the spot to stay this lewd enterprise. William's men did not sustain the onset; some fled headlong, the other part barred themselves into the church, round which they had nearly completed the fosse, and, manning the tower and the outworks which they had finished, vainly strove to drive off the assailants with darts and arrows, but the besiegers, reckless of wounds or death, forced their way through the windows, and hurling firebrands on the defenders were speedily masters of the place." Those of Cumyn's party who were not burnt to death were taken prisoners and conveyed to Durham. Cumyn's nephew went mad on the first day of the enterprise, and a wicked stonemason, who worked harder than the rest, went mad the day the place was recovered, and died raving before he reached Durham.

In spite of the precautions of Cumyn, some of the monks escaped to York and, armed with the authority of the Pope, they elected their Dean, William de Sancta Barbara to the See of Durham. The new bishop was greatly beloved, and his name was long cherished by posterity on account of the good work he did in the diocese. He brought back with him to Durham the Archbishop of York, and the usurper, finding himself checkmated at all points, donned the garb of a penitent and surrendered without reserve or stipulation the whole of his power and possessions.

THE LORDS OF WHITWORTH.

WHITWORTH is an ancient freehold, and was at no time attached to the Monastery at Merrington. The earliest mention of its proprietors appears in the Boldon Book, which records that in 1183 the Manor was held by Thomas de Acle, by the free service of the fourth part of a Knight's fee. Thomas de Acle (Aycliffe) appears to have been the tenant of Woodham, near Aycliffe, holding it by military service to the King. Bishop Philip de Poictou changed to knight's service the tenure of the Vill of Whitworth which Thomas de Acle and his predecessors had held by drengage service "from the nearer ditch which encloses Our park towards Whitworth, as far as Yldreburn, and to the place where Yldreburn falls into the Wear." And for this concession Thomas de Acle granted to the Bishop the land and grove from the dyke of the Old Park as far as the fishpond towards Auckland. The owner of Whitworth up to that time had been a country squire, but he was now raised to the dignity of knighthood.

The exact date of the foundation of Whitworth Church is not known, but it is certain that it existed as a Chapel of Ease to Merrington somewhere about this period, and it is quite within the bounds of possibility that it was another part of the bargain with Bishop Philip that the Lord of Whitworth was to build and endow a chapel close to his mansion.

There is a stone effigy lying in Whitworth churchyard of a knight in armour. The crossed legs suggest that he was a Crusader, and the elevated sword may be taken to indicate that he died in battle. The only Lord of Whitworth who is known to have lived in the time of the Crusades is Thomas de Acle, and so the inference may fairly be drawn that the effigy in the churchyard is that of the worthy knight himself. It is probable that from this time he became known as Thomas de Whitworth, Whitworth being a more considerable estate than Woodham. Anyhow it is clear that by 1261 the Lords of Woodham had taken the name of Whitworth, for in that year the attestation of Thomas de Whitworth appears on a document still in existence. The name appears in later records over and over again, in fact one Thomas de Qwyte worthe, who lived in the first half of the fourteenth century, appears to have been quite in demand as a witness to ecclesiastical documents. The evolution of the name Whitworth is of interest. It began as Qwyte worthe, and within a single

century it passed through the stages of Qwitteworth, Wyteworthe, and Witewre before it settled into Whitworth.

The effigy in the churchyard is rapidly deteriorating in consequence of its exposed situation. It is a really fine piece of workmanship, and deserves better treatment than is accorded to it at present. The limbs are beautifully chiselled, and the shield and naked sword, and the quaint cylindrical helmet, with apertures for the sight and the joints arranged in the form of a cross, are still to be discerned. The feet of the knight rest upon a writhing figure, symbolical of a crushed Saracen, and by his side is a pet dog. Another effigy adjoining is that of a lady, the head resting on a cushion, and the hands clasped in the attitude of prayer, but the features have been destroyed, and the figure is broken in two halves. The body is robed in a loose gown, and a cloak or mantle hangs from the shoulders.

The Old Park referred to in Bishop Philip's Charter is, of course, the place near Byers Green, known to this date by the same name.

Fish were preserved in the fishponds by the monks of Merrington for Friday's meal. The fishpond towards Auckland cannot now be identified, but it is supposed to have been at Binchester Blocks, near to the site of the Iron Church. Several old charters relating to the district mention particularly two fish-

ponds, called the East and West Pool. The head of the East Pool was close to the Durham highway, and there can be little doubt that it occupied the Wood Vue Cycling Track in Tudhoe Grange. A great depth of peat has been taken from this spot, a clear indication that it was once filled with water. An old charter of the year 1279 makes it certain that a pool formerly existed at Wood Vue, and this charter is of peculiar interest to the district, inasmuch as it contains the first recorded mention of Spennymoor and Tudhoe. Tudhoe was another of the ancient freeholds on the boundary of the moor, and at that time was in the possession of Sir Hugh Gubyon. The charter to Sir Hugh dated 1279 granted "that the Prior's tenants of Merrington should hold in severalty (that is to say to the exclusion of other parties), certain portions of Spennymoor which had been brought into tillage, saving to Sir Hugh and his men of Tudhoe their right of "enter common after the crops were carried," and for this concession the Prior granted "that Sir Hugh might turn his mill race belonging to Tudhoe Mill into its ancient channel, and moreover Sir Hugh and his men should dig marle wheresoever they would within the Prior's lands, so that they did no damage in the corn, nor in the meadows."

'Marle' is a compact greyish flaggy stone somewhat resembling slate, and it is remarkable for

the surprising number of fossil fish that it contains. These are beautifully preserved, and specimens can at any time be procured for geological study from the railway cutting at Ferryhill. There is a very fine section at that point of the yellow sands of the Permian series, and the marl is one of the beds exposed. Marl must have been of use in some form or other at that period, else the right to dig it would not have been reserved. Surtees suggests that it may have been used as a manure.

There is no means now of ascertaining the course of the mill race prior to its being turned into its ancient channel, but the race of Tudhoe Mill can still be identified by those curious enough to take the trouble to look for it. It runs from Wood Vue, high up on the east side of the beck, behind the hedge, and can be traced all the way to Tudhoe Mill.

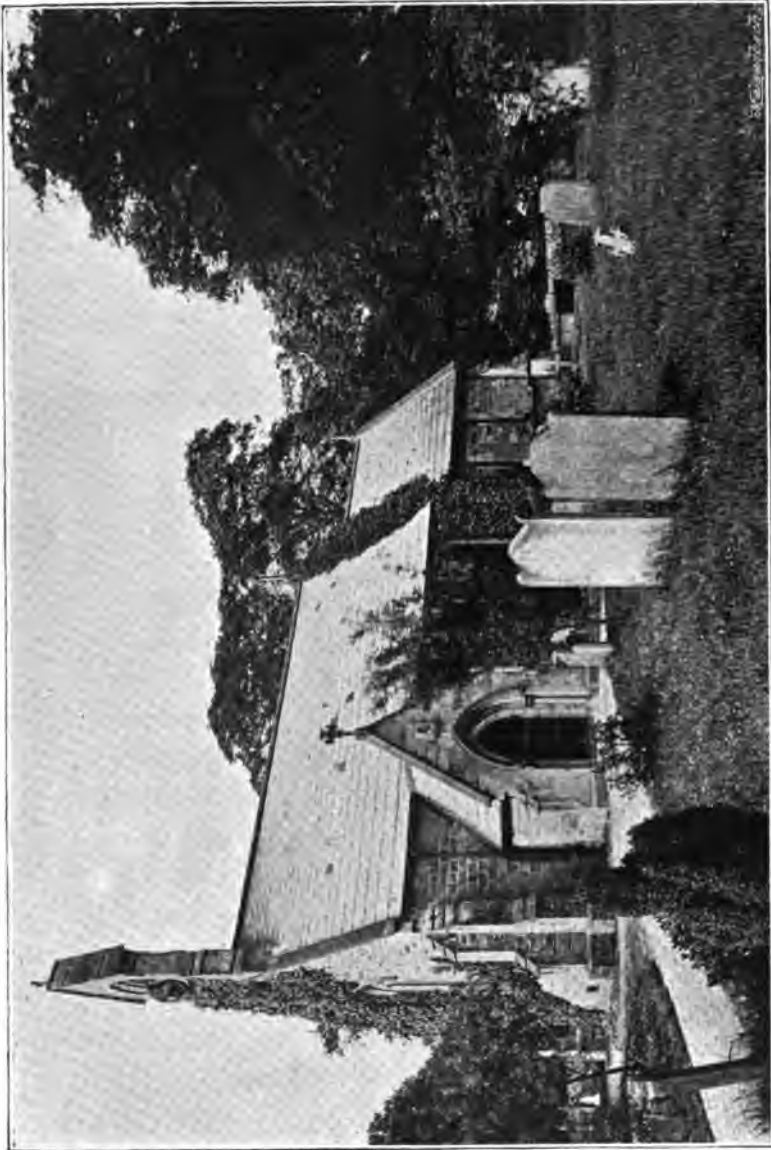
The land upon which the fishpond stood was part of the moor, and had not then been annexed to the Tudhoe estate. The Prior's land lay on both sides of it, and the Lord of Tudhoe could only turn the water from its natural channel by leave of the Prior.

At that time Spennymoor was a waste covered with thorns and whin-bushes, much as Tudhoe Wood is to-day. Mr. John Tate, in his interesting little book upon the ancient history of Spennymoor, traces

the etymology of the name to the Celtic and Roman word "*spino*," a thorn, the word being the same in both languages. "*Mor*" is Anglo-Saxon for moor.

The moor was common property, and the tenants of the manors adjoining were accustomed to pasture their flocks and cattle upon it whenever they pleased. But from time to time as the flocks increased the serviceable portion of the moor became less and less, and the only thing to be done was to induce some of the tenants to give up their rights. Consequently in 1303 we find that the Lord of Tudhoe relinquished to the Prior his right of common in the Merringtons, and Peter, of Trillesdon (Thrislington), and Christian Kellaw, of Hett, relinquished their rights on Spenny-moor. Thus from time to time the common land in the neighbourhood of the Durham highway became the absolute property of the Priory.

Nevertheless there were still considerable tracts left by the roadside unenclosed. The roads of those days were not to be compared with the roads of these. The Romans paved their roads with stone, but the Normans were by no means so extravagant, and in winter time the travellers by the highway were compelled to go upon the adjoining land when they came to a particularly bad place. It was therefore useless for the landowners to enclose these strips, and so they were left unoccupied for many hundreds of years. In later



WHITWORTH CHURCH.

times, when landowners began to enclose the moor, the hedges were planted so as to leave the strips outside.

Roadside strips are to be seen everywhere, even to this day. They are common property, and nobody has any right to enclose them. Nevertheless the owners of the adjoining land are continually filching them piece by piece, and if this new form of highway robbery is not stopped in time it will go on until roadside strips become a memory of the past.

There are roadside strips towards Middlestone and Leasingthorne on which houses have actually been built, and similar enclosures have been made along the Auckland highway, whilst in Whitworth Lane the hedge has been twice brought forward, so as to enclose quite a wide strip of land.

Large tracts of unenclosed common are still to be found all over the kingdom, but when a locality becomes populous it is obvious that common rights cannot endure without a good deal of friction among the people making use of them. Even as early as the year 1303 these difficulties began to be manifest in Spennymoor, and by an old grant of John de Whitworth, dated 1366, after stating that there had been strife and controversy between the neighbours respecting the common rights on Spennymoor, the Prior and his tenants of Hett, Fery, East, West, and Midlest Merrington were allotted common "in Gellesmore and Wiverpiece as far as Uddersake as

c

the old fosse runs to Wormdene, saving that all lands sown with corn should remain in severalty till the crops were cleared." Wormdene is the wood by Ox Close, and the old fosse or ditch that ran down to it can still be clearly traced. Gellesmore and Wiverpiece were the fields between the fosse and the highway, and Uddersake has been identified by Mr. Tate as the old building at the back of Whitworth House. The name of this building is Water Slack, and there can be little doubt that this is a corruption of Uddersake.

The Lords of Whitworth have never been behindhand in the matter of enclosures, and it is of interest to note that so far back as the reign of Edward III. they were commencing to augment their estate by this means. The Lords of Whitworth at that time were not, however, the Shaftos of to-day. The estate came into the Shafto family by purchase nearly three hundred years later.

THE BATTLE OF NEVILLE'S CROSS.



THE reign of Edward III. was full of incident for the people in the neighbourhood of Spennymoor. At its very outset the King of Scots, retaining in his declining years the martial spirit which had raised his nation from the lowest ebb of fortune, decided to invade England. He collected an army of 25,000 men on the border and brought them as far as the Wear. The young King Edward, delighted at the prospect of distinguishing himself, marched at the head of a great force with all haste to Durham, and made the Castle his base of operations. The Scots, seeing that they were outmanœvred, avoided a meeting with the English army, and ultimately retreated without noise in the dead of the night, leaving Edward in the worst of tempers at being baulked of a fight. Eight years afterwards he punished them sorely for his disappointment. He again marched an army northward, and this time he went straight

to Scotland. The Scots withdrew into their hills and fastnesses, and so he contented himself with wreaking vengeance upon their property. The next year he was in Scotland again, and would probably have annihilated the people altogether, had not his attention been diverted to France.

And so it came to pass that in 1346, whilst he was away fighting the Battle of Crecy, the wily Scots assembled their forces, and marched over the border under their King, David Bruce, devastating the country even to the gates of Durham. But Queen Philippa, who was still in England, had heard of this project, and made all possible haste to Newcastle-on-Tyne, from whence she summoned all available forces to come at once to defend the North.

The nobility collected 16,000 men, and marched with them towards Durham. On the day before the battle they halted at Merrington, and from the top of the tower they were able to see the army of the Scots gathered together at Beau-repaire (Bearpark). The English leaders hesitated whether to advance or to observe the enemy and await the attack in so favourable a position, but the marshals and standard bearers, moving a little forward along the old Roman road on the top of the ridge, the troops insensibly followed them, and thus they proceeded slowly to Ferryhill Village. Here a strong foraging party of the Scots,

under Douglas, fell unexpectedly into their midst, and they pursued them with a loss of 500 men along the North road as far as Sunderland Bridge. It is from this incident that Butcher Race derives its characteristic name. The English troops then returned to the neighbourhood of Hett, but the standard bearers went forward, and again the army moved in order of battle towards the Red Hills, leaving Durham on the right.

Douglas, who had escaped from his pursuers, meanwhile reached the Scottish camp, and gave the first information of the approach of the English force. He strongly advised the King to retreat to the hills and avoid an engagement, but his advice was rejected with disdain, and the Scots advancing, they came upon the English force at Neville's Cross near Durham.

On the night before the battle a vision had appeared to the Prior of Durham commanding him to take the holy corporax cloth, wherewith St. Cuthbert was accustomed to cover the chalice when he said mass, and to put it upon a spear point, and next morning to repair to a place on the west of the city called the Red Hills, and there remain to the end of the battle. Which vision the Prior taking for a revelation of God's grace and mercy through the mediation of holy St. Cuthbert, he went early next morning with his monks to a little hillock in the

Shaw Wood called the Maiden's Bower, and there they most devoutly prostrated themselves in prayer for the victory of the English. A great number of the Scots came upon them, but these were afraid to commit violence upon such holy persons so occupied in prayer. The spear with the holy corporax cloth thus remained in sight of both the armies, and whilst the remaining brethren of the monastery poured forth their hymns and prayers from the towers of the Cathedral, their eyes wandered with anxious doubt over the field of the conflict.

The Scots were severely galled by the English archers as they advanced, and John Graham, impatient at seeing his men fall without the means of resistance, requested of the King an hundred lancers to break the archers, but his request was denied, and the troops were ordered to keep the line of battle. Actuated at once by courage and indignation Graham threw himself singly or with few attendants amongst the archers, dispersed them on every side, and fought till his horse was struck with a broad arrow, and, himself wounded and bleeding, was scarcely able to regain the ranks of his countrymen with life. The High Steward immediately led his division to the charge with broad swords and battle axes, the archers were driven back through Lord Percy's division, which they disordered in their retreat, and the Scots, pursuing their advantage, threw the whole

of the body into confusion. Victory hovered on the side of the Scots, but the day was restored to the English by the courage and decision of Edward Baliol, the Lord of Barnard Castle. With a powerful body of cavalry he made an impetuous charge on the High Steward's division, and drove them from the field. King David was meanwhile engaged with equal fortunes against Lord Neville of Raby, and Baliol, suffering the High Steward to retreat unmolested, threw himself on the flank of the royal troops, which were left uncovered by that commander's flight. The disorder of the Scots became irretrievable, and the third body, under the Earl of Moray, were cut to pieces in the woods.

After all was lost a gallant band of nobles formed themselves around their King, and fought with the courage of despair till only eighty of their number survived. David, after receiving two arrow wounds, and resisting several attempts to take him captive, was compelled to surrender to John Copeland, a Northumbrian squire, two of whose teeth he dashed out with his clenched steel gauntlet.

Out of an army of 30,000 Scots and French auxiliaries, 15,000 were left dead upon the field, and the river Browney ran red with their blood. After the battle the Prior and his monks, accompanied by Ralph, Lord Neville, and other nobles proceeded to the Cathedral, and joined in solemn thanksgiving to

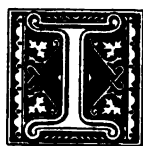
God and holy St. Cuthbert for the victory obtained that day.

In commemoration of this great battle a cross was erected on the Brancepeth road, of which no remnant now remains, for in 1589 it was defaced and broken down. The shaft that now occupies the site, although carefully enclosed by railings, is only an ancient milestone. Year by year, on the anniversary of the victory, the choir of the Cathedral climb the stairs of the central tower and sing the Te Deum upon its summit, in remembrance of the part played by the monks of Durham at the battle of Neville's Cross.

Amongst the boys of Durham City it is believed that if any person walk nine times round the cross and then lay his head upon the ground he will hear the noise of the battle and the clash of the armour.

A number of relics of the battle are preserved in the museum at Durham.

SPENNYNGMORE AND TWDDOWE.

T is uncertain when coal was first worked in the locality, but there is evidence that so early as the year 1354 there were pits in the neighbourhood of Ferryhill. It was probably worked at Whitworth and Tudhoe about the same period, for the coal at that point is very near to the surface, and the ancient shafts do not appear to go farther than the first seam. In 1335 Alexander de Whitworth (Lord of Woodham) died, and was succeeded by his son Thomas, father probably of a second Alexander, who left the estate to John de Whitworth, his brother and heir, in 1356.

The manor is mentioned no more until the year 1420. It was then in the possession of the Nevilles. This great house had now attained the height of its power. It had bought up all the available land in the locality, and its possessions extended in an almost unbroken line from Raby to Brancepeth. The Nevilles not only acquired Whitworth, but Old

Park, Byers Green, Newfield, and Tudhoe as well, and in 1420, Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, obtained a license from Bishop Langley to impark 40 acres of land at Whitworth. This was the commencement of Whitworth Park, and the grant of the Bishop gave authority to proceed against poachers.

The Bishops of Durham (called at this time Duresme) were styled Prince-Bishops, and their power in the See was little less than that of the King. They had authority even to pardon treasons and felonies, and their *jura regalia* were confirmed over and over again, until in 1836 they were abolished at the death of William Van Mildert, the last of the Prince-Bishops.

In 1446 the common rights on Spennymoor were further restricted. In that year Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland, surrendered to the Prior all his rights on the south side of the highway, so that all that was now left of the common land consisted of strips by the roadside, in some cases, however, of considerable width. The Prior appears now to have enclosed the south side of the moor, for in an inventory of his belongings, dated 1464, we find under the head of 'Spennynghmore' the following entry: "Richard Claxton, of Old Park, holds a triangular piece of land, and renders for it per annum two shillings." These old inventories and rent rolls are of interest, because of the quaint spellings of familiar names.



BRANCEPETH CASTLE.

Tudhoe appears in the *Rentale Bursarii* of 1539 as Twddowe. It says "Of tenants of Twddowe for a parcel of land in Wellinges and Yorkesfelde (York's-field, now York Hill), per annum twenty shillings."

The Nevilles held the Whitworth estate up to the time of the Northern rebellion in 1569, when it became forfeited to the Crown on account of their complicity in the rebellion.

The Duke of Norfolk had had it in his mind to become the third husband of Mary Queen of Scots, then a prisoner at Bolton, and with that object in view he made friends of many of the nobility, so that when the time should come for him to ask Elizabeth for her consent, she might be afraid to withhold it. Among the nobility and gentry that seemed to enter into Norfolk's views were many devout Catholics, and they hoped that if Mary were once set at liberty they might possibly be able, with the aid of Norfolk's party, to place her upon the throne of England. Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, who now possessed enormous influence in the North, was one of the leaders of this party. Elizabeth received information of the conspiracy, and promptly lodged the Duke of Norfolk in the Tower, although in reality he was not a party to the Catholic plot at all. Meanwhile the Earl of Westmoreland and his colleagues had arranged for the services of a body of troops from the Low Countries,

when suddenly a summons came to them to appear before the Queen and explain themselves. This precipitated the rising before the arrangements were complete. The Catholics seized the Bishopric of Durham, and gathered together a force of 5,600 men. They expected to be joined by all the Catholics in the country, but everything went wrong. Elizabeth promptly sent a force to meet them, and they dispersed without striking a blow. The Earl of Westmoreland fled to Scotland, and from there to Flanders, and the Queen confiscated all his immense possessions, so that the next owner of Whitworth and Tudhoe was no other than Queen Elizabeth herself.

Among the Catholic gentry who took part in the revolt was one whose name is better known than that of the Earl of Westmoreland to the people of Spennymoor, Gerard Salvin of Croxdale. He ran a narrow risk of losing his head, but the Queen eventually pardoned him. This same Gerard Salvin nearly came to grief again in the very year he was pardoned. He appears to have been a poor-spirited specimen of his race. He had buried his father on the 16th of February, and, seeing that Catholic burials were now forbidden by the law, he decided to have no service at all. This was a praiseworthy defiance to the newly established religion, but when he was charged with the affront, instead of braving

the business through, he consented to recant and do penance in public. The usual attire of a penitent under circumstances such as these was a white sheet, but it appears that in this particular instance the extreme humiliation of the sheet was dispensed with, probably on account of the penitent's rank. But the words he was forced to utter were quite bad enough. They are recorded in the Parish Register of St. Oswald's, Durham, and the following is an extract from the entry: "I acknowledge that of late receiving pardon at Her Grace's hands, I, by a solemn oath, promised to obey all Her laws, yet not having the fear of God before my eyes, but minding other wilful and sinister considerations, I, indecently, unnaturally, and unneighbourly buried my father as though he had not died of God's kind. Therefore I am heartily sorry for this my misdemeanour, confessing the same of my own free will, desiring you all, my neighbours and parishioners, not only to be witness of my repentance, but also to take good example by my punishment to eschew the like offence." He finished off the proceedings with the Lord's Prayer and the Holy Communion.

Croxdale came into the hands of the Salvins in the fifteenth century through the marriage of Gerard, a younger son of the ancient house of Salvin, of Herswell, in Yorkshire, with Agnes, granddaughter of

Robert de Whalton, and it has now continued in the family for sixteen generations.

Strange to say, it is at this period that we first meet with another of the ancient families still represented in the district, namely, the Shaftos. They appear to have been a border family, and at the Raid of the Redesquair in 1575, a trumpery border quarrel, the survival of the old feud between the Scots and the English, the battle cry of the English raiders was "A Schaftan and a Fenwick." The story of the Raid is related in an old border ballad included in Sir Walter Scott's collection, and apparently the representative of the Shafto family was wounded in the affray, for the ballad says :

Young Henry Schaftan he is hurt :
A souldier shot him wi' a bow.

The Shaftos can, however, carry their pedigree back to a much earlier period than this. In the year 1135 the head of the family was John Foliot, Lord of Fenwick. His grandson Cuthbert married the heiress of Roger Melwick, Lord of Shafto, and Thomas Foliot, the son of Cuthbert, who appears to have resided at Shafto Crag, changed the family name from Foliot to Shafto.

In the year 1615 King James the First sent letters to the Bishop commanding an array of all men in the Bishopric able to bear arms betwixt

the ages of 16 and 60. The array took place at Spennymoor, and 8,320 men put in an appearance.

About this time several small freeholds were made in Whitworth by sale of lands from the Crown, but by far the greater portion of the estate, with the manorial rights, had passed into the possession of Thomas Watson, who was previously a tenant under the Earl of Westmoreland.

The minerals appear to have been let by Thomas Watson to Hugh Wright, for in 1626 there was a dispute between a man named Heath and Hugh Wright as to the boundary of the manor. It appears that Wright had been sinking pits on the common, near to Middlestone Moor, and certain of the freeholders of the district, who still exercised common rights on the roadside strips, objected to the coal being taken from beneath the common. One of the questions put to the witnesses was this: "Do ye know the moore or waist called Spennimore wherein the coal pits now at variance are souncke, yea or no? Do ye know the place pretended in the bill to be bounders, viz., the deadman's grave, the way leading from thence to Ferry-on-the-Hill extending westwards to Milderston (Middlestone), and whether is the said ground parcel of Spennimoor." The "deadman's grave" is a field on the north side of the highway opposite the Binchester Hotel, and it is said to have come by its name in consequence of a

luxuriant streak appearing annually in the crops, and passing in a slanting direction across the field. The suggestion is that a battle being once fought in that neighbourhood, the dead were laid along the full length of a ditch, and there covered in.

The year 1633 witnessed one of the finest sights ever beheld by the people of the locality. Charles I. had decided to go to Scotland to be crowned there, and he made his progress to the North in a brilliant and imposing cavalcade, attended by a large retinue of the nobility. He stayed on his way at various castles, and, among others, at Raby, so that his nearest road from there lay through Auckland and Whitworth.

The nobility and gentry of both kingdoms rivalled each other in expressing all duty and respect to the King, yet within a very few years from that time the country was plunged into the horrors of civil war, and two of the local gentry who perished in the Royalist cause were Francis Salvin, the brother of the Gerard Salvin who took part in the Catholic rising of 1570, and Gerard Salvin his son. These joined the Royalist forces at Durham.

The Marquis of Newcastle was hastening southward to the aid of the King, who had suffered very heavily in Yorkshire, while the army raised in Scotland for the assistance of the Parliamentary party was pursuing him in a great frost and snow by way

of Quarrington Hill and Ferryhill. At Darlington they came upon the rear of the Royalist forces, and a slight skirmish ensued, but the Marquis pressed on, being unwilling to risk a battle until he had joined the King's army at York. Nevertheless the Roundheads continued to harass him, and another skirmish occurred at Northallerton, in which Gerard Salvin was slain. At last the Royalist forces met at York, and then they turned upon the enemy. A terrible battle resulted at Marston Moor, about four miles from York. At nightfall all was over. "God made them as stubble to our swords," wrote the general of the Parliamentary Army at the close of the day. The Royalist cause in the North had perished at a single blow. Gerard Salvin was lying stiff and stark at Northallerton with face upturned to the sky, and his father lay on Marston Moor, another of the victims of that terrible conflict.

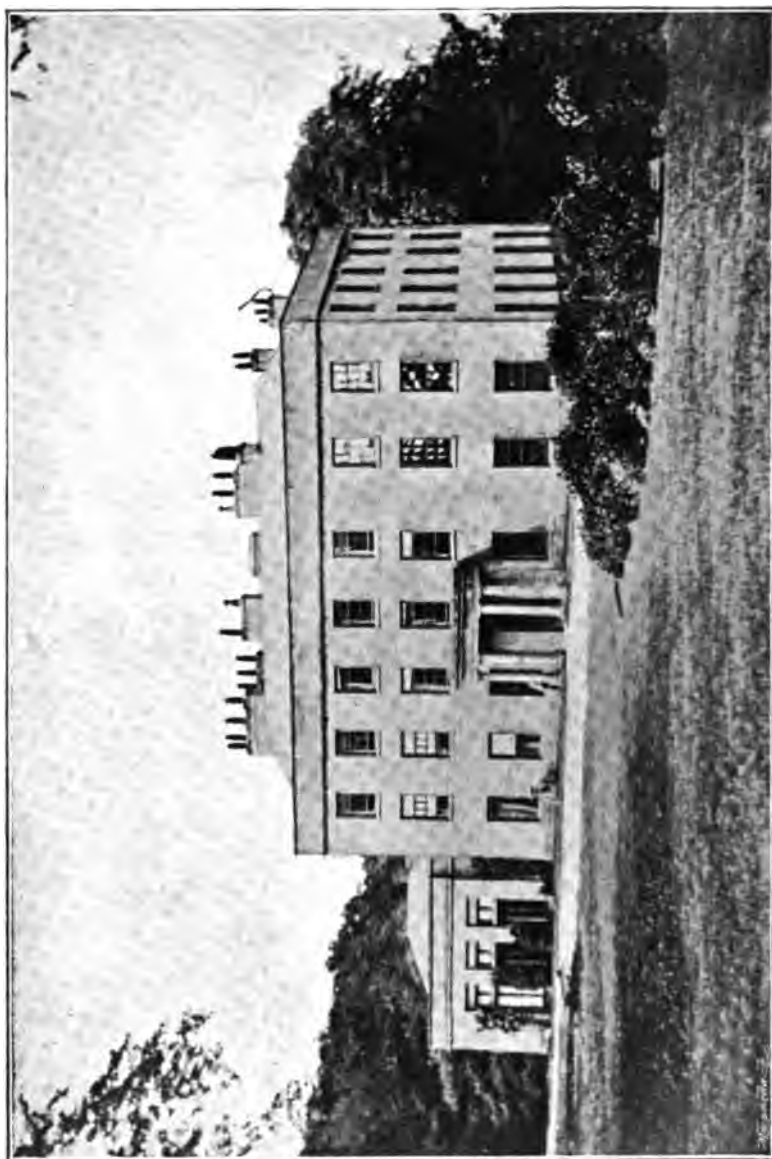
Croxdale has always been a stronghold of Catholicism, and the Gerard Salvin who perished at Northallerton is recorded to have perverted from Puritan principles twenty families, almost the entire population of the parish. An entry to this effect appears in a list compiled by order of the Bishop of that time. The ancient chapel, standing in desolation close to Croxdale Hall, was once the chapel of the Catholics, but ultimately it became the Protestant church, and continued so until 1845, when

p

the church of St. Bartholomew was built. The chapel was then bought by the Salvins for a mortuary. Notwithstanding, however, the transfer of the ancient chapel to the Protestants, the Catholics of Croxdale still continued their worship according to the Catholic rites in a chapel at Croxdale Hall, and this is the chapel used by them at the present time.

The Puritans destroyed the Catholic worship wherever they were able to do so, and transformed the Protestant churches into conventicles in keeping with their own narrow creed. The first manifestation of their power was to alter the services of the Church. The parson of Whitworth at that time was Stephen Hegg. He held the living from 1628 to 1661, and, like the celebrated Vicar of Bray, he changed his principles to order. In 1645 he records in the Church Register: "James, son of Ambrose Bell, of Tuddo, was the last baptism with the book of Common Prayer," and in 1661, "Charles the Second proclaimed in London, May the 8th, and at Durham, May the 12th, on which day I, Stephen Hegg, began to use again the Book of Common Prayer."

He seems to have allowed Cromwell's party to have things very much their own way. The Whitworth Register records a couple of marriages performed by officers in Cromwell's army.



WHITWORTH HALL BEFORE THE FIRE.

"James Crosby, of Ferryhill, and Annie Gray were married ye 28th day of November, 1653." "At Durham, in the presence of the Mayor for the time being, George Adamson and Jane Trotter were married by Colonel Francis Wren of Spennymoor as he was going to Durham, July 11th, '54."

The owner of Whitworth in the time of Charles I. was William Baxter, of Corbridge, who married the granddaughter of Thomas Watson. He was a loyal supporter of the King, supplying him with substantial aid. During the Commonwealth he was compelled by the Court of Sequestration to choose between forfeiting his estate and paying a fine of £247 10s. od. He paid the fine, but he had to sell the estate to do it, and so in 1652 it came by purchase into the possession of Mark Shafto, the third son of Robert Shafto, Sheriff of Newcastle.

Mark Shafto was known to his cotemporaries as Six-bottle-Mark, in compliment to his capacity for port wine. A tablet on the wall of Whitworth Church makes delicate allusion in Latin to his fondness for the bottle. It says, "He was a most estimable man, in all his life amiable, and an example of piety towards God, liberality towards the poor, hilarity among friends, humanity towards all, easier to be praised than imitated."

The Register of Merrington Church has an entry under the date 1650 that "Mr. Robert Shafto,

of Newcastle, and Mrs. Anne Hall, of Great Chilton, were married the 2end day of January by Mr. Greene de Crocksdale, ye Curate." Robert Shafto was probably an elder brother of Mark, and it is possible that Mark may have ascertained through this alliance that Whitworth was for sale. Mark Shafto was succeeded by his son, and then by his grandson Robert Shafto, Serjeant-at-law, who was knighted in 1677 by Charles the Second at Whitehall, and married a niece of the great Sir Thomas Fairfax, Commander-in-chief of the Parliamentary army.

In 1677 the small freeholders in the neighbourhood of Whitworth discussed with Sir Robert Shafto the expediency of dividing up the moor according to the extent of their estates adjoining. The matter was referred to the consideration of Ralph Salvin, gentleman, Anthony Salvin, gentleman, and Thomas Longstaff, quaker, and their award was confirmed in the Chancery of the County, so that no dispute might afterwards arise in reference to the division. The area to be divided was 243 acres. Sir Robert Shafto received as his portion all the moorland from Wormdene-burn on the east to the Bishop's Close Road on the West. This is not the Bishop's Close Rows of Tudhoe Grange. It used to run from the highway at the top of the Middlestone Moor sewage farm, and has been unlawfully closed within living

memory. William Adamson was awarded the "Deadman's Field," containing 10 acres on the north side of the highway from Bishop's Close Road on the east to Byers Green Lane on the west, also the triangular piece of ground at the Four Lane Ends opposite Spennymoor House, the ancient boundary of which can still be distinguished by the trees with their roots protected by stone walls. Adjoining the "Deadman's Field" there was a strip of 4 acres, and this was allotted to the Vicar of Whitworth. Then came 9 acres allotted to John Wright, and 12 acres between this and Bishop's Close Farm allotted to Richard Hopper. The only portion of the common left was a piece of 2 roods 24 perches, and this was reserved as common, so that all might have the benefit of a spring upon the land. All these small plots were subsequently purchased by the Shaftos, the last to come into their possession being the allotment to John Wright, which was acquired in 1803. The allotment to the Vicar, and other portions of glebe land within the manor, including the old vicarage house, which stood in front of the hall, were exchanged in after years for the site of the present Whitworth Vicarage, and the fields behind it. Sir Robert enclosed his own allotment, and built the house at the Four Lane Ends known as Spennymoor House. This was built as an inn for the accommodation of travellers, and, up to com-

paratively recent times, was the only house to be found on the moor.

While Sir Robert Shafto was adding to his estate the Salvins were also adding to theirs, but in a different manner. The ill-fated Gerard was succeeded by his son Anthony, who married the heiress of Burn Hall, Eleanor Peacock, and thus added this fine estate to the Croxdale property. He died in 1663, and was succeeded by his son James.

THE MURDER AT BRASS' FARM.



ALTHOUGH Merrington only comes by rights into this history as the parent of the Urban District of Spennymoor, it is impossible to pass over this period without some reference to the tragedy at Brass' Farm, now known as Hill-house Farm, and to the young folks as Cutty-throat Farm. The murder took place in 1683, and is best recorded in the words of a contemporary scribe:—"Jan. 28, 1683. A sad cruell murther comitted by a boy about eighteen or nineteen yeares of age, nere Ferryhill, nere Durham, being Thursday at night. The maner is by report. When the parents was out of doores a young man being sone to the house, and two daughters was kil'd by this boy with an axe, having knockt ym in ye head, afterwards cut their throats, one of ym being asleep in ye bed about ten or eleven yeares of age, the other daughter was to be married at Candlemas. After he had kil'd the sone and the

eldest daughter, being above twenty yeares of age, a little lass her sister, about ye age of eleven yeares, being in bed alone, he drag'd her out in bed and kil'd her alsoe. This same Andrew Millus, alias Miles, was hanged in irons upon a gybett nere Ferryhill upon the 15th day of August, being Wednesday, this yeare, 1683."

The above concise statement has been supplemented from time to time with details which may possibly be true, but are more likely to be legendary. Tradition says that the farmer, Mr. John Brass, and his wife had left the house on a Christmas visit. Andrew Millus, or Mills, as he is now styled, had been up to this time a quiet inoffensive lad, though of somewhat deficient intellect. There appears to have been no premeditation. He said in his confession that the devil suggested in his mind, "Kill all, kill all." The elder girl struggled with him for some time, and he did not murder her till after he had broken her arm, which she had placed as a bolt to secure the door of the inner room where the younger members of the family were sleeping. He then despatched the son by a blow with an axe. His intentions as to the youngest child were almost frustrated by her entreaties and promises of bread, butter, sugar, and toys, but in going out of the room he met a hideous figure in the passage that commanded him to go back and finish his bloody work,

which he did by dragging the child from beneath the bed and dashing out her brains. He met the parents on their return at the spot where he was afterwards gibbeted, and their horse, terrified by the unearthly howling of dogs and screechings of owls, refused to proceed further. Some troopers marching from Darlington to Durham seized him, and he was taken to Durham for trial.

He was gibbeted on what was then a common by the roadside, near to the Thinford Inn, about half a mile to the north of Ferryhill, in full view of the scene of the murder, and hung there in chains for a considerable period. A gruesome story is told to the effect that he survived for several days, and was kept alive by his sweetheart, who fed him regularly with milk, which she passed between the bars of the iron cage in which his tortured limbs were bound, and it is even said that a loaf of bread was placed by somebody just within his reach, but so that the iron spike upon which it was fixed might enter his throat whenever he attempted to allay the pangs of hunger by gnawing at the bread. His agonized cries are said to have been heard for miles, and several of the country folk actually left their homes until life had departed from the poor wretch.

It is to be hoped for the sake of humanity that this part of the story is a dramatist's fiction. Some years ago a local playwright dramatised the story for

the Spennymoor theatre, and it drew immense houses. It has frequently been performed in booths and theatres, and whenever it is revived in the district, so strong is the local interest in this tragedy of two hundred years ago, that the theatre is crowded for every performance.

A portion of the gibbet, known as "Andrew Mills Stob," stood for many years, but a belief became prevalent in its efficacy as a charm for toothache, and the people pulled it to bits piecemeal. The remnants were finally removed by a Mr. Laverick, who purchased the property and ploughed up and enclosed the place of execution, so that it cannot now be identified. Whilst the gibbet was standing people were afraid to pass it by night, and those who were compelled to travel that way used to run with all their might when they came to the ghostly spot.

The victims were buried at Merrington, and the people of Merrington are so proud of the fame that this poor half-witted lad has brought to their little village that they look upon the monument in the Churchyard as a possession of priceless value, and no visitor is permitted to leave the neighbourhood without a pilgrimage to it. As a matter of fact it is not the original monument at all, and only dates from 1789, more than a century later than the tragedy.

It is inscribed :—

Here lie the Bodies of
John, Jane, and Elizabeth, children
of John and Margaret Brass,
Who were murdered the 28th day of Jan., 1683,
By Andrew Mills, their father's servant,
For which he was executed and hung in chains.
Reader, remember, sleeping
We were slain ;
And here we sleep till we must
Rise again.
"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his
blood be shed."
"Thou shalt do no murder."
Restored by subscription in 1789.

As a matter of fact the restorer was a private gentleman, but he preferred to have it stated that the restoration was by subscription. The tomb as it exists at the present time is in need of further repair, but the inscription is still distinct, although the word "executed" has been obviously scraped out by somebody. There is a local tradition to the effect that this was done by a relative of Andrew Mills, but such is not the case. It was done by an old eccentric innkeeper named Willy Lynn, who used to keep the 'Bay Horse' at Merrington. He was fond of argument, and it was a favourite contention of his that the man could not have been executed and hung in chains as well, consequently the word

"executed" was inaccurate, and accordingly he obliterated it.

The people of Merrington tell many queer stories of this old fellow. He was an inveterate collector of old scrap iron, and accumulated quite a great heap of horse-shoes and such like articles. Men in want of a drink used to get over his wall, and then come and sell him some of his own scrap iron. In conversation he was accustomed to use a forcible expression of an entirely original character, "Perfectly blast ye." He came out into his yard one morning and found his cows finishing off a sheaf of oats. He was horrified at the extravagance, and shouted out to the servant "Perfectly blast ye, what did you give them cows all those oats for!" "Whish't," said the servant, "I stole 'em." The old man gave a quiet smile, and went indoors.

A few years ago, while the floor of his inn was being repaired, the masons found that the hearthstone was no other than an ancient tombstone. Some of the old men of the village who were living in the time of Willy Lynn then remembered how it came there. It appears that Mr. Tyson, the Vicar of Merrington at that period, used to ride to Bishop Auckland every market day on a galloway. The galloway was accustomed to graze in the churchyard, and he acquired a habit of scratching himself against this particular tombstone. One day

some men came into the 'Bay Horse,' and announced that the gallows had knocked the stone down. Willy Lynn thereupon offered a five shilling bowl of punch if they would go and fetch him the stone, so they brought it to the inn, and laid it on its face to serve as a hearth-stone for the inn kitchen.

For the benefit of any member of the family who has lost a tombstone the inscription upon it may lead to its recovery. It is as follows:—"Here lies the body of W. Wood, deceased, June the 2nd, 1706, aged 41. Also his wife, Mary, deceased, August 10, 1720, aged 71."

The Rev. John Tyson will always be remembered in Merrington for his prodigious appetite. He thought nothing of polishing off a leg of mutton at his dinner, and was once heard to declare that a goose was too much for one and too little for two. It is said that on one occasion he stopped at Gowland's in the New Elvet, Durham, for luncheon, and happened to leave in the hall a leg of mutton intended for home consumption. Mr. Gowland, knowing the parson's appetite by bitter experience, told his ostler to take the leg of mutton into the kitchen, and it was served up for the parson's meal. Mr. Tyson finished his repast, and then called for his bill, but the worthy host said there was nothing to pay, as he had eaten his own leg of mutton. The innkeepers of Durham dreaded his coming, in

fact, Gowland is said once to have called out to him as he entered the archway, "Now, Tyson, I canna de with ye for eighteenpence, I canna de with ye." Mr. Tyson was not a teetotaller, and he kept a supply of whisky in the vestry to fortify him for the pulpit. His parishioners were not greatly given to church-going, and once he looked up at the words, "Dearly beloved brethren," to find that the clerk constituted his sole congregation. He did not proceed with the service; he shut up the book with a snap, and invited the clerk to come into the vestry and have a drink.

Mr. Tyson was fond of lecturing to agriculturists upon the scientific methods of farming that have now come to be universally adopted. He managed the glebe land with conspicuous ability, and was unrivalled in his selection of the "tenths" belonging to him as vicar. There was no cheating him, he knew the value of the crops as well as the farmer did, and "tithing day" was a reality at Merrington. When the corn was in stook, the parson and his man would mark every tenth stook with a piece of stick. The farmer made a point of telling the gleaners that they might glean as much as they liked from the parson's stooks, so long as the rest were left untouched. The farmers were never in love with the tithing system, and would even make a sacrifice for the pleasure of cheating the parson.

If a sow had a litter of ten, the tenth was killed rather than the parson should have it. Mr. Tyson was continually on the watch, and a farmer who once congratulated himself upon escaping his eagle eye with a nice brood of goslings was destined to a cruel disappointment. The parson waited till they were fat and ready for the table, and one day, as they were coming out of the farmyard, his man seized the best of them. The farmer expostulated, on the ground that there were not then ten of them, and finding that this argument would not go down with the vicar, he asked, "What for tha' didna get it when it wur little." "I waited till it was ready," was the vicar's reply. A Ferryhill woman once had a tenth baby, and directly her husband saw it, he said, "We mun gie this to the Parson, Mary, he taks a tithe of everything, tha knaws." But Mr. Tyson drew the line at babies.

KIRK MERRINGTON.



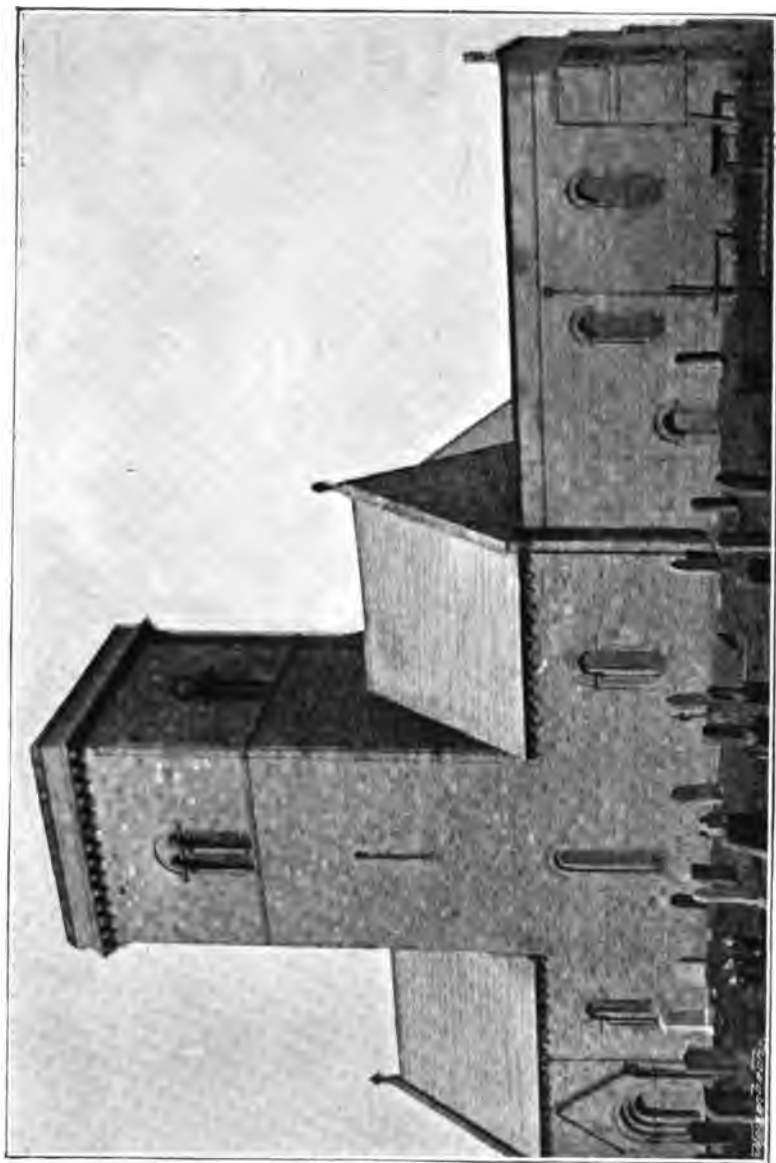
MERRINGTON Churchyard is full of quaint tombs. Next in order of popularity to the tomb of the murdered children is that of their parents, in this instance a truly quaint and original piece of work. The inscription is as follows:—

1703. Margaret Brass, wife of John Brass,
In peace therefore lie downe will I,
Taking my rest and sleep,
For Thou only wilt me, O Lord,
Alone in safety keep.

Dun by Me, A. Kay.

Here lieth the body of John Brass, of Ferryhill,
who departed this life Jan. 22nd day, 1722.

Some of the tombstones have lain buried for centuries, with only a small portion projecting, but the present vicar, the Rev. R. Coulton, has unearthed all that are of special interest, and these are now laid in the chancel of the church at the back of the Communion Table. The stone of greatest value is of course that of Hodge of Fery, but some of the others are almost of equal interest. There



MERRINGTON CHURCH.

are several coped grave-covers, representing the roof of the *domus ultima* (the last house of the dead) the stone being carved to represent tiles, with a ridge at the top, which, in one of the specimens, appears to have borne an inscription. The ridge has been exposed for centuries, and whatever inscription was originally carved upon it has long since perished, but the lower portion, being buried below the ground, is well preserved. Some of the coped grave covers have sockets at each end. These were probably made to hold a cross or a vase of flowers. A learned antiquary who examined these treasures some years ago, pronounced them to be at least 700 years old. Another stone of interest preserved in the chancel is a twin grave cover, a stone carved into the shape of two little coffins side by side, with a cross upon each, and, close by, is a stone that appears to have been carved with a representation of the Tree of Life, at least the stalk is there, and there are indications that leaves were at one time part of the design. Singular to say there are patches of mortar adhering to the carved face of the stone, whilst the back of it is properly dressed. This would suggest that it once formed part of an earlier building on the same site, and had been utilised in a later building as a dressed stone with the carving built into the wall. It was found lying in the Churchyard, so that when the Church was

E

restored in 1849 it must have been thrown out as useless.

An unusual feature of this Church is that the communion table stands some distance away from the wall. The traditions of the Church say that this has always been the case. It is possible that in one of the earlier structures there may have been a small chapel at the back of the altar. The chapel is there no longer, but the table continues to occupy its ancient position. The table itself is the oldest piece of work belonging to the Church. It stands on legs of turned oak, and dates from the time of James the First.

The communion plate is also interesting, more especially because of the inscription around the edge of the cup—"The Church Plate of Maryinton's Parish, Aprill 22end, 1709." The present vicar is an enthusiastic antiquarian, and the treasures of Merrington are therefore in safe hands. Some time ago a thigh bone was dug up in the Churchyard with a small French coin upon it, and the Vicar is inclined to believe, from the period of the coin, that it was buried in the trousers pocket of a Scotchman, killed about the time of the battle of Neville's Cross, the Scots receiving aid at this period from the French. There can be no doubt whatever that Merrington is the burial ground of a battle field, for right across the Churchyard, from Mr. Bruce's grave to the fire-

hole door of the Church, there is a trench filled with layer upon layer of uncoffined bones. Part of this trench is in the modern extension of the Churchyard, and the sexton can tell at once when he comes to it, because the earth is easier to dig than on the adjoining sides, and it is no uncommon circumstance for skulls and bones to be thrown out by the gravedigger's spade. Possibly the bodies may be those of soldiers slain during Cumyn's rebellion. Another of the fruits of the Churchyard is a brass medal, with a stem, probably used as a tobacco stopper. It bears on one side of it the head of a Pope, and on the other that of a Cardinal. These being turned upside down, the profiles appear as the devil and a fool. A number of these medals were issued in Queen Anne's reign by the opponents of Sacheverel.

The Registers of Merrington Church date from 1578, and are among the earliest in the country. They are full of quaint entries, and not only are baptisms, marriages, and deaths duly chronicled, but various events of local interest are mentioned as well. The earliest of the registers begins as follows:—
“E.R. xljti. This booke was maid the day and yeire wthin written, and doathe Contein and maike recorde Naymes of all such as was maryed, christned, and buried within the pishe of Kirke Merrington as theire after followithe.” Under the date 1615,

February 12th, is the following entry:—" Katherine White, a Scottish woman, being a stranger, having a passe to travell homeward, fell sicke by the way and being brought hither upon a barrow from Winnleston extreem sicke, dyed here, and was buried the twelfth of Februarie, 1615." Births and deaths appear to have occurred frequently in the bakehouse, both at Merrington and Ferryhill. Public bakehouses are known to have been established in other places in the time of Elizabeth, and they were probably used as a refuge for mendicants. People mentioned in the Merrington registers as having died in the bakehouse are all stated to be poor. " Nicholas Bell, the son of a poor man," " Isabel, an old distressed criple," " Elizabeth, a yong infant, the daughter of John Ranson, a wandering beggar," and so on. Probably the bakehouses were the places where the poor went to be supplied with food, and it may readily be conceived that they were loth to turn out from the warm fire, so that in time the public bakehouses became places of shelter as well as food. The people of Merrington often had collections in the Church, but the objects were very different from those for which collections are made in the present day. " Jan., 1691. Coll yn Pish Ch: of Merr: for ye inhabitants of Teingmonth and Shaldon for losses suffered by ye French fleet, the sume of ten shillings and fourpence." The captives

in Algiers and sufferers by casualties at sea or fires all received aid at various times. These were the days before insurance companies, and a fire was then a disaster instead of a blessing. Under the date 1661 we find, "The information of John Douthwaite. These were the words which John Widdifield spake against the Kings Majtie: he said the King was a bastard and the Queen his mother *as follows*, and if the king were there he would stab him with a knife and wash his hands in his blood, and for that Papishly rogue, Dr. Cosins, he hoped to see him hanged."

Dr. John Cosin was the first bishop after the Restoration. He was not hanged, but died universally beloved for his munificence and public spirit, and by his will he left large benefactions for the poor. He rebuilt the castle at Bishop Auckland, with its magnificent chapel, at a cost of £26,000, also Cardinal Langley's Hospital and Schools at Durham, and he founded the library on Palace Green. He also beautified many of the churches of his Diocese, and the richly carved screen and poppy head stalls at Merrington date from his time.

The poppy heads were nearly lost to the Church some years ago. The churchwardens decided that new pitch pine seats were infinitely preferable to the beautiful old stalls, and so they chopped up the stalls and made a bonfire of them in the Church-

yard. Archdeacon Thorp came in the nick of time and just succeeded in snatching the poppy heads from the flames. The bulk of them he took to adorn his Church in Holy Island, but a few remain in the chancel.

The Churchyard at Merrington is intersected by a footway. At one end is a gate over an iron grating, beneath which there is a pit. The present vicar was informed when he came to the parish that the grating was placed there to prevent pigs from wandering into the Churchyard when the gate was open. A resident at Merrington says that when the nights are dark the villagers prefer to go round by the road rather than through the Churchyard. On one occasion, however, a drunken man came to the gate and told some people who were standing there that he meant to go through, even though he raised the dead. He started bravely, but suddenly a white figure appeared to him out of the mist, and he took to his heels screaming. The next day he found that a new tombstone had been erected close by the path, and it was this that had scared him.

There was formerly an ancient custom attached to this Church of kissing the bride. It was undoubtedly kept up by the Rev. Thos. Ebdon, who held the living up to the year 1831. He was a bashful man, but he looked upon it as a duty. It is said that Mr. Tyson, his successor, conformed to

the custom, and it is to be hoped that the present vicar will not allow so interesting an accompaniment of the marriage ceremony to fall into disuse.

The Merrington people are a very quiet and sober community to-day, but they were not always so. In ancient times they appear to have kept on their good behaviour by the Halmote Court of the Prior, for in the old court rolls there is a record that Preciosa, the daughter of the vicar, was fined for leyrwit, also that the constables of the vill were not to allow the game of *ad pilam* under a penalty of forty shillings. It is by no means clear what kind of a game this was, but *pila* is Latin for "ball," and Mr. Geo. Neasham, in his "North Country Sketches," suggests that it may possibly have been football, a game somewhat roughly played at that early period. "Leyrwit" is either the Anglo-Saxon leyerwit, an offence against morality, or it may possibly be lar-wit or lore-knowledge, that is to say witchcraft.

For many years after the opening of the collieries around Spennymoor Merrington was quite a busy place, some of the tradesmen having as many as seven apprentices. The building of the High Street of Spennymoor, however, put an end to this state of things, and Merrington is now the last place in the world in which the housewives of the district would think of going shopping.

BONNIE BOBBIE SHAFTO.



GOING back for a time to Whitworth, we find that Sir Robert Shafto was succeeded by his son, Mark, who was appointed High Sheriff of the County in 1709 and died in 1723. His eldest son, Robert Shafto, then succeeded to the estate. He entered Parliament and received the honour of Knighthood, but died without issue, leaving his brother John, who also sat for the County, his heir at law. The son of John Shafto was the "Bonnie Bobbie Shafto" of the well-known ballad :

Bobbie Shafto's bright and fair,
Combing down his yellow hair,
He's my ain for evermair,
Hey for Bobbie Shafto.

Bobbie Shafto went to Court
All in gold and silver wrought,
Like a grandee as he ought,
Bonnie Bobbie Shafto.

All the ribbons flying about,
All the ladies looking out,
Clapping their hands and giving a shout,
Hurrah for Bobbie Shafto.



BONNIE BOBBIE SHAFTO.

Bobbie Shafto rode a race,
Well I mind his bonnie face,
Won it in a tearing pace,
Bonnie Bobbie Shafto.

Bobbie Shafto throws his gold,
Right and left like Knights of old.
Now we're left out in the cold,
Bonnie Bobbie Shafto.

Bobbie Shafto's gone to sea,
Wi' silver buckles at his knee,
When he comes back he'll marry me,
Bonnie Bobbie Shafto.

But he did nothing of the kind. He married Anne Duncombe, the heiress of Duncombe Park, in Yorkshire, and poor Miss Bellasyse, the heiress of Brancepeth, died for love of him. There is a portrait of this favoured lover in the Hall at Whitworth, in which he is represented as very young and very handsome, with golden hair. He was a celebrated courtier and man of fashion in his day, and is said to have squandered a good deal of the money that his wife brought to him. He ultimately became Member of Parliament for the County, and died in 1797, and was succeeded by his son, John, who died unmarried in 1802, leaving the estate to Robert Eden Duncombe Shafto, the grandfather of the present owner of Whitworth Park.

Spennymoor, at the beginning of the century, although it possessed only a single house, was not

by any means a dull place. This was before the railways came, and the only conveyances were the stage coaches. There are still in the neighbourhood two melancholy relics of this period, the inn at Rushyford, where the coaches to the North changed horses, and the embankment between Ferryhill and Thinford, which was commenced in order to save the horses from the terrible strain of the Ferryhill bank. This latter was an enterprise of the Turnpike authorities, who hoped to realise a small fortune from the tolls. But before it could be finished the reign of the stage coach was over. The iron horse had taken its place, and there was no further need to improve the road.

Road travelling had its dangers as well as its discomforts. It is said that travellers on the road from Durham to Bowes were frequently molested by footpads and highwaymen. One of these gentry, Andrew Tate by name, is probably buried at Croxdale where the Bowes road and the Darlington road divide. He was hanged there in 1602 for the murder and robbery of several persons near Sunderland Bridge. The roads across the moor appear to have been at times very rough and dangerous for coach travelling. In 1811 the Darlington road was so bad that Mr. Hoult, of Rushyford, lost seven horses with broken legs, and the Merrington tenants of the Prior of Durham were compelled by the

Halmote Court to set up "dols," or guide posts, so that those crossing the moor might keep safely to the highway. At one time there was a good deal of traffic through Merrington, it being on the Pierce-bridge road; in fact, there is reason to believe that it was formerly the only main road from Park Head to Croxdale. The present road must, nevertheless, have been a track across the moor from a very early period, but it is possible that when Charles I. passed through the district he may have travelled by the Hagg Lane bridle road, which appears from ancient maps to have been formerly a broad highway. The Spennymoor road was maintained by means of tolls, and these were collected at turn-pike gates. The gates have long since been removed, but the ancient toll-houses are still in existence, and one of them is the little cottage at the junction of the Auckland and Westerton roads, and another is at Croxdale near to the station. Spennymoor is on the Bowes road, as will be seen from the milestones by the highway, and the coaches from Bowes and Barnard Castle to Durham used to change horses at the inn now known as Spennymoor House. The garden in front was the old inn yard, with its pump and troughs, and the traffic on the road with post-chaises, stage coaches, and carriers made it a lively and busy spot.

The races of the district were held on the south

side of the Moor from Clyde House to the Gasworks, and the miners of Leasingthorne, Tottenham, and all the colliery places round about used to attend in all the glory of their gala costume. The pitmen of the past delighted in gaudy colours. Their holiday waistcoats, called by them *posey* jackets, were frequently of very curious patterns, displaying flowers of various hues. Their stockings were blue, purple, or even pink or mixed colours, and many of them wore their hair very long. On working days it was rolled up in curls or tied into a queue, but when dressed in their best they allowed it to fall gracefully on to their shoulders. Some of them wore two or three ribbons round their hats, placed at equal distances, and in these it was customary to insert bunches of primroses or other flowers.

During the Christmas holidays some of them would journey to Sunderland and other large towns clad in black breeches with red stripes, white shirts or tunics with all kinds of fantastic adornments, and hats surmounted by streamers, to perform a sword dance. The children hailed their advent with great satisfaction, and liberal contributions were given by the spectators of their performances. There were two buffoons in the company. One was a "Tommy" who collected the money in an old tobacco box, and was distinguished

by a chintz blouse with a belt, also a hairy cap with a fox brush hanging from it. The other was a "Bessy" who wore a woman's gown and beaver hat. The performance consisted mainly of a song or dialogue in rhyme, in the course of which a quarrel was supposed to take place, one of the characters being killed and then revived by a comic doctor. The party always consisted of nine men, viz., five dancers, two clowns, a clothes carrier, and a fiddler. The sword dancers are still to be seen on rare occasions, but all the old English customs are fast dying out, and therefore the following account of this singular performance, given by one who for twelve years acted as a sword dancer, may hereafter be of interest. The performance commenced with an introduction of each dancer individually by the "Tommy" of the company :

It's a ramblin' here I've ta'en
The country for to see,
Five actors I have brought,
Yet better cannot be.

Now my actors they are young,
And they've ne'er been out before,
But they'll do the best they can,
And the best can do no more.

Now the first that I call on
Is George our noble King,
Long time he's been at wars,
Good tidings back he'll bring.

One of the dancers steps from the ring, and follows the "Tommy," holding his sword upright as he walks round the outside of the ring, the sword having a piece of wood on the point of it. Then the rest are introduced in turn, each in the same manner.

The next that I call on
He is the squire's son,
He's like to lose his love
Because he is too young.

Little Foxey is the next,
With the orange and the blue,
And the debts he has paid off,
Both French and Spaniards too.

Now the next that I call on
Is the King of Sicily,
My daughter he shall have,
And married they shall be.

Now the next that I call on
He is a pitman bold,
He works all underground
To keep him from the cold.

The pitman follows the rest, and then the clown sings:

It's now you've seen them all,
Think of them what ye will,
Though we'll stand back awhile
Till they do try their skill.

Now fiddler then, take up thy fiddle,
Play the lads their hearts' desire,
Or else we'll break thy fiddle
And fling thee a back o' the fire.

The five men then commence dancing round, with their swords all raised to the centre of the ring, till the first clown orders them to tie the points of their swords in "the knot." When this is done, and the five swords are knotted, the knot is held upright by one of the dancers whom they call Alec. Alec then takes his sword from the knot, and retaining it gives the second dancer his sword, then the second dancer gives the third dancer his sword, the third dancer gives to the fourth, and the fourth to the fifth.

The rhymes and characters varied at different periods and in different places, but the date of those given above may be approximately fixed from the references to Foxey and the King of Sicily. "Foxey" was Napoleon, and on the 1st of December, 1799, the King of Sicily entered into an alliance with Great Britain to assist in his overthrow.

The ancient customs of the pitmen and their gaudy attire have long become things of the past. Even the practice of having the knees bare is fast going out, and before many years are over it is to be feared that this last element of the picturesque in the costume of the miner will have entirely disappeared.

CHARLES WATERTON.



CHARLES WATERTON, the great naturalist, went to school at Tudhoe. When he became an old man his mind often wandered back to the scenes of his childhood, and three days before his death he wrote down a number of reminiscences, of which the following are of special interest to the people of this locality:—"Towards the close of the last century a Catholic school was founded at Tudhoe village, some four or five miles from the venerable city of Durham. The Reverend Arthur Storey, a profound Latin scholar, was the master, and my father put me under Mr. Storey's care about the year 1792. Mr. Storey engaged a holy and benevolent priest, by name Robert Blacoe, to help him in the school. He was ill in health, having severely injured himself in his escape over the walls of Douai, at the commencement of the French Revolution. To this good priest succeeded another, the Reverend Joseph Shepherd. He was a very correct disciplinarian, and one morning whilst he

was treating me to the unwelcome application of a birch rod, I flew at the calf of his leg, and made him remember the sharpness of my teeth. I wish I had them now; but no one has a right to lament the loss when he is four-score years of age. In the days of Mr. Shepherd priests wore breeches and worsted stockings, so these were no defence against the teeth of an enraged boy, writhing under a correctional scourge.

“But now let me enter into the minutiae of Tudhoe School. Mr. Storey had two wigs, one of which was of a flaxen colour, without powder, and had only one lower row of curls. The other had two rows and was exceedingly well powdered. When he appeared in the schoolroom with this last wig on, I knew that I was safe from the birch, as he invariably went to Durham, and spent the day there. But when I saw that he had his flaxen wig on, my countenance fell. He was in the schoolroom all day, and I was too often placed in a very uncomfortable position at nightfall. But sometimes I had to come in contact with the birch rod for various frolics independent of school erudition. I once smarted severely for an act of kindness. We had a boy named Bryan Salvin, from Croxdale Hall. He was a dull, sluggish, and unwieldy lad, quite incapable of climbing exertions. Being dissatisfied with the regulations of the establishment he came to me one

F

Palm Sunday, and entreated me to get into the schoolroom through the window, and write a letter of complaint to his sister Eliza at York. I did so, having insinuated myself with vast exertion through the iron stanchions which secured the window, *sed revocare gradum*. Whilst I was thrusting might and main through the stanchions on my way out—suddenly, oh, horrible! the schoolroom door flew open, and on the threshold stood the Reverend Mr. Storey—a fiery, frightful, formidable spectre! To my horror and confusion I drove my foot quite through a pane of glass, and there I stuck, impaled, and imprisoned, but luckily not injured by the broken glass. Whilst I was thus in unexpected captivity, he cried out in an angry voice, ‘So you are there, Master Charles, are you?’ He got assistance, and they pulled me back by main force. But as this was Palm Sunday my execution was obligingly deferred until Monday morning. And thus I went on month after month, in sadness and in sunshine, in pleasure and in pain; the ordinary lot of adventurous schoolboys in their thorny path to the temple of erudition.

“Some time about the year ’94 there came to Tudhoe four young grown up men to study for the Church. These four young men all happened to be endowed with giant appetites, but oily Mrs. Atkinson, the housekeeper, thought that now and

then upon a pinch they might struggle on with a short allowance. This was absolutely contrary to the law of nature; so they, seeing that I was a dashing and aspiring lad, it was arranged amongst us that I should cater for them surreptitiously, from time to time, under the cover of the night. Accordingly I stormed the larder, and filled my pockets with bread and cheese, &c. My exertions were always successful and my movements were never suspected, as I planned most cautiously during the day what I had to mature in the dead of the night. In due time these four promising young men left Tudhoe, and were located at a place called Crook Hall, where they may be said to have been the foundations of the future college of Ushaw. I myself, too, consider that I have a right to claim a mite of merit, having contributed to the bodily support of those who laboured at Ushaw at its birth. Their task was that of giants in perpetual work, *Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.*

“But let us return to Tudhoe. In my time it was a peaceful, healthy, farming village, and abounded in local curiosities. Just on the King’s highway, betwixt Durham and Bishop Auckland, and one field from the school, there stood a public house called the White Horse and kept by a man of the name of Charlton. He had a real giant English mastiff, half starved for want of food, and so ferocious that

nobody but himself dared to approach it. This publican had also a mare surprising in her progeny ; she had three foals, in three successive years, not one of which had the least appearance of a tail.

“One of Mr. Storey’s powdered wigs was of so tempting an aspect on the shelf where it was laid up in ordinary, that the cat actually kittened in it. I saw her and her little ones all together in the warm wig. He also kept a little white and black bitch, apparently of King Charles’ breed. One evening, as we scholars were returning from a walk, Chloe started a hare, which we surrounded and captured and carried in triumph to oily Mrs. Atkinson, who begged us a play-day for our success.

“On Easter Sunday Mr. Storey always treated us to ‘Pasche eggs.’ They were boiled hard in a concoction of whin-flowers, which rendered them beautifully purple. We used them for warlike purposes, by holding them betwixt our forefinger and thumb with the sharp end upwards, and as little exposed as possible. An antagonist then approached, and with the sharp end of his egg struck this egg. If he succeeded in cracking it, the vanquished egg was his ; and he either sold it for a halfpenny in the market or reserved it for his own eating. When all the sharp ends had been crushed, then the blunt ends entered into battle. Thus nearly every ‘Pasche egg’ in the school had its career of combat. The

possessor of a strong egg with a thick shell would sometimes vanquish a dozen of his opponents, all of which the conqueror ultimately transferred into his own stomach when no more eggs with unbroken ends remained to carry on the war of Easter Week.

The little white and black bitch once began to snarl and then to bark at me when I was on a roving expedition in quest of hens' nests. I took up half a brick and knocked it head over heels. Mr. Storey was watching me at the time from one of the upper windows, but I had not seen him until I heard the sound of his magisterial voice. He beckoned me to his room there and then, and whipped me soundly for my pains.

"Four of us scholars stayed at Tudhoe during the summer vacation, when all the rest had gone home. Two of these had dispositions as malicious as those of two old apes. One fine summer's morning they decoyed me into a field (I was just then from my mother's nursery) where there was a flock of geese. They assured me that the geese had no right to be there, and that it was necessary we should kill them, as they were trespassing on our master's grass. The scamps then furnished me with a hedge stake. On approaching the flock, behold, the gander came out to meet me; and whilst he was hissing defiance at us, I struck him on the neck and killed him outright. My comrades immediately

took to flight, and on reaching the house informed our master of what I had done. But when he heard my unvarnished account of the gander's death he did not say one single unkind word to me, but scolded most severely the two boys who had led me into the scrape. The geese belonged to a farmer named John Hey, whose son, Ralph, used to provide me with birds' eggs. Ever after when I passed by his house, some of the children would point to me and say, "Yaw killed aur guise."

"Tudhoe had her own ghosts and spectres just as the neighbouring villages had theirs. One was the Tudhoe mouse, well known and often seen in every house in the village; but I cannot affirm that I myself ever saw it. It was an enormous mouse, of a dark brown colour, and did an immensity of mischief. No cat could face it; and as it wandered through the village all the dogs would take off frightened out of their wits, and howling as they ran away. William Wilkinson, Mr. Storey's farming man, told me he had often seen it, but that it terrified him to such a degree that he could not move from the place where he was standing.

"Our master kept a large tom cat in the house. A fine young man in the neighbouring village of Ferryhill had been severely bitten by a cat, and he died raving mad. On the day that we got this information from Timothy Pickering, the carpenter at

Tudhoe, I was on the prowl for adventures, and in passing through Mr. Storey's back kitchen his big black cat came up to me. Whilst I was tickling its bushy tail it turned round upon me and gave me a severe bite in the calf of the leg. This I kept a profound secret, but I was quite sure I should go mad every day for months afterwards.

"There was a blacksmith's shop leading down the village to Tudhoe Old Hall. Just opposite this shop was a pond, on the other side of the road. When any sudden death was to take place or any sudden ill to befall the village, a large black horse used to emerge from it and walk slowly up and down the village carrying a rider without a head. The blacksmith's grandfather, his father himself, and his three sons and two daughters had seen this midnight apparition rise out of the pond, and return to it before the break of day. John Hickson and Neddy Hunt, two hangers-on at the blacksmith's shop, had seen this phantom more than once, but never durst approach it. Indeed every man and woman and child believed in this centaur spectre, and I am not sure if our old master himself did not partly believe that such a thing had occasionally been seen on dark nights.

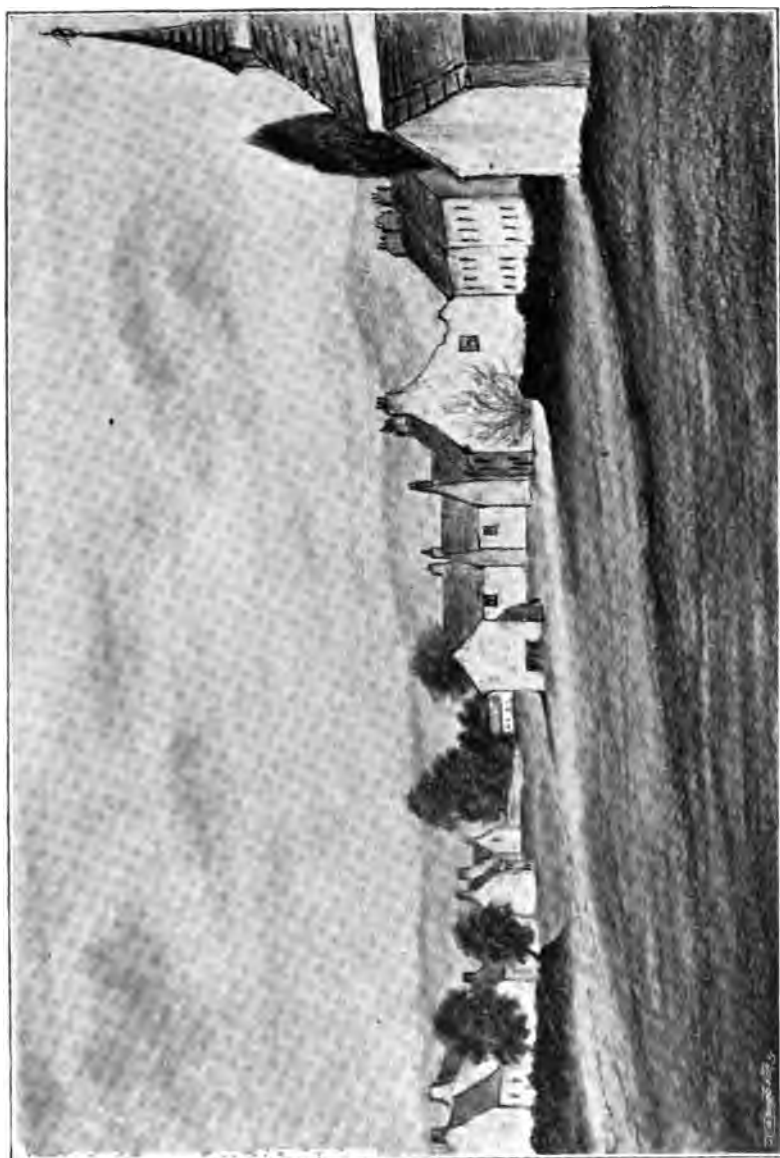
"Young Timothy Pickering, the respectable carpenter of the village (he who had married Miss Ord, the papermaker's daughter), had a cat of

surprising beauty. I once made some verses on this cat, and as Mr. Meynell, the lay tutor, fancied that I alluded to himself he whipped me without any kind of trial. Timothy Pickering had an assistant carpenter, by name Taylor. He had a wen over his eye as large as a pigeon's egg.

"As you went down the road below the blacksmith's you were close on the village tailor's cottage. His name was Lawrence Thompson, but everybody called him Low Thompson. He had lost half of the forefinger of his right hand, was a facetious and talkative fellow, and could sing a good song. He would now and then get an evening invitation to the school, where he sang the popular song of the 'White Hare,' but I remember only one stanza, viz :—

Squire Salvin rode up to the hill,
And he damned them for they were all blind,
Do you see how my bitch, Cruel, leads?
Do you see how she leaves them behind?' "

"Opposite Low Thompson's cottage across the road stood Tudhoe Old Hall, tenanted by a family named Patterson. A wall flanked the house, and close to this wall there grew some sycamore trees with holes in them, frequented by starlings. I used to climb these trees and take the starlings' nests. Formerly a Squire Salvin, of the Croxdale family, used to live at this old hall, and here he kept his harrier hounds.



FROM A SKETCH BY THOMAS JOHN BUNGAY.

TUDHOE IN 1860.

“The vicinity of Tudhoe produced vast quantities of hazel nuts; we were allowed to go in quest of them and to bring off as many nuts as we could stow away upon our persons. The nut season always closed with a recreation-evening at the school. It was termed Nut-crack-night, and Low Thompson invariably honoured the festival with his smirking presence, never forgetting the song of the ‘White Hare.’

“Old Joe Brown (the same person noticed in my autobiography), of vast bodily bulk, came to Tudhoe School about this time, from Sir John Lawson’s at Brough Hall. We soon became hand in glove. He performed the duties of butcher, pig-server, scrub, and brewer; and ultimately migrated to Stonyhurst, where he exercised his vocation with great zeal and success, and there we renewed our valuable acquaintance.

“Close to us was a field where Mr. Storey’s cattle used to feed. It was called the Little Garth. One morning two of the bigger boys coaxed me to get up on one of the cows, promising that they would stand by my side. When I got my seat the beggars ran away. Off went the cow at full speed. I kept my seat for a time, and then I flew clear over her head, not much worse for the fall.

“Mr. Storey kept one bay mare, admirably calculated to convey him backward and forwards to the

City of Durham on business, and occasionally to Bishop Auckland. He was very frugal in his establishment apart from the school, saving all he could spare to comfort the poor. Bishop Gibson, a learned and holy prelate, was his guest, together with his faithful servant, Thomas, for more than a year and a half whilst I was there.

“My first adventure on the water made a lasting impression, on account of the catastrophe which attended it. There was a large horsepond, separated by a hedge from the field which was allotted to the scholars for recreation-ground. An oblong tub, used for holding dough before it was baked, had just been placed by the side of the pond. I thought that I should like to have an excursion on the deep; so taking a couple of stakes out of the hedge, to serve as oars, I got into the tub and pushed off—

‘Ripæ ulterioris amore.’

I had got above half way over, when, behold the master and the late Sir John Lawson, of Brough Hall, suddenly rounded a corner and hove in sight. Terrified at their appearance, I first lost a stake and then my balance; this caused the tub to roll like a man-of-war in a calm. Down I went to the bottom, and rose again covered with mud and dirt. *‘Terribili squalore Charon.’* My good old master looked grave, and I read my destiny in his counten-

ance : but Sir John said that it was a brave adventure, and he saved me from being brought to a court martial for disobedience of orders and for having lost my vessel. But it is time to cease on school affairs ; fully aware that too much pudding chokes a dog. Let us visit the surrounding country.

“Tudhoe has no river, a misfortune ‘vale deflendus.’ In other respects the vicinity is charming ; and it afforded an ample supply of woods and hedgerow trees to insure a sufficient stock of carrion crows, jackdaws, jays, magpies, kestrels, merlins, and sparrowhawks, for the benefit of natural history and my own instruction and amusement.

“Betwixt Tudhoe School and Ferryhill there stood an oaken post, very strong and some nine feet high. This was its appearance in my days, but formerly it must have been much higher. It was known to all the country round by the name of Andrew Mills’ stob. We often went to see it, and one afternoon whilst we were looking at it an old woman came up, took her knife from her pocket, and then pared off a chip which she carefully folded up in a bit of paper. She said it was good for curing toothache. I suspect that the remains of this oaken post have long since mouldered away. I have not been there for these last seventy years, and probably if I went thither I should not be able to find the site of this formerly notorious gibbet.”

Charles Waterton died at Walton Hall, in Yorkshire, on May 27th, 1865. A rough stone cross stands in the park at Walton between two great oaks at the far end of the lake, to mark the place of his burial, and it bears in Latin the following inscription, written by himself:—"Pray for the soul of Charles Waterton, whose tired bones are buried near this cross." His two books, "Wanderings in South America" and "Natural History Essays," will live for centuries to come as two of the most charming books in the English language.

The custom of "jarping" Paschal eggs has been handed down from boy to boy for generations, and many centuries hence it is possible that the autobiography of Charles Waterton may be quoted in explanation of it. By-the-way how many youngsters are aware that the words they say when beating a ball—

Tid, Mid, Misera,
Carling, Palm, Paste-egg Day—

are taken from an ancient couplet intended to teach them the proper order of the Sundays at the close of the Lenten season? Carling Sunday is said to have been so called because in a time of great scarcity a ship with a cargo of peas was stranded at South Shields on that particular Sunday. The starving people ascribed their salvation to St. Charles, and ever since then the day has been

kept to an indigestible extent in honour of the Saint.

Charles Waterton is not the only writer of note who has lived in the locality. Whilst he was at Tudhoe Dr. Lingard, the great historian, came there in charge of the Douai refugees. Douai was the home of the great Catholic seminary founded in the time of Elizabeth by Cardinal Allen for the reception of the English youths who were prevented by the religious persecutions of the time from studying for the priesthood in their own country. One of its earliest achievements was the production of the famous Douai translation of the Bible. The college ultimately became famous all over Europe, and it continued to be a great seat of learning up to the time of the French Revolution. During the Reign of Terror, however, a body of citizens came unexpectedly into the college and dissolved it. The students had the greatest difficulty in saving their sacred treasures from sacriligious hands, and many of them suffered a terrible imprisonment, but at last they were given their liberty. They fled to England to escape further persecution, and those who belonged to the North found a refuge in Mr. Storey's house at Tudhoe, where they were shortly afterwards joined by Dr. Lingard. Mr. Storey managed with them as well as he could for six months, but the school at Tudhoe was too small to accommodate

them, and they were compelled to seek for new quarters. At first it was proposed that extensive alterations should be made to the building, and plans were prepared with that object, but it was ultimately decided to remove the students to Crook. They remained there until 1808, the date of the foundation of the college at Ushaw. It is interesting to know that Tudhoe was nearly selected as the site of this noble institution.

Mr. Storey gave up his school in 1805, and his successor, Mr. Simpson, a Protestant, appears to have ruined Tudhoe for boarding school purposes. The success of the boys' school prompted him to commence a similar institution for young ladies in the house now occupied by Mr. Crone, but the young ladies used to walk with the young gentlemen in the green lane of Tudhoe Wood, now known as Lovers' Lane, and the parents got to know about it, and withdrew their patronage and support. Subsequently Mr. Storey's school was used as a Catholic chapel, but since the erection of the present church it has served as a Home for 40 Catholic girls, maintained in it at the cost of the various Unions in the diocese. The establishment is managed by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

THE TUDHOE GHOSTS.

IT would hardly be possible to find in the County of Durham a village possessing a finer collection of ghosts than Tudhoe. The Tudhoe Mouse has been frequently seen even in recent times, and there is said to be a Green Lady who "walks" in Tudhoe Old Hall. The Green Lady is ingeniously connected with the Black Horse and the Tudhoe Mouse. There is a local tradition to the effect that the horse's master died in battle, that the horse's head was also struck off, and that nevertheless the spirit of the horse remained for days over its master's body defending it from wild animals. The Mouse belonged to the Green Lady, taking the place of a pet dog, and tradition says that when anyone in the village is going to die the Black Horse comes out of the pond and meets the Green Lady and her mouse at the brink. What happens afterwards nobody knows. Nobody has as yet had the courage to wait and see. A former tenant of the Old Hall used to give out that he had seen a lady dressed in green with

white stockings walking round his bed, but there is reason to suppose that he wanted to live in the old house rent free, and hoped to prevent anyone from taking it over his head by giving out that it was haunted. Whatever truth there may have been in his statement, the wife of the present tenant of a portion of the building claims to have already had a similar visit. At any rate she affirms that she sneaked her bedroom door most carefully one night, and yet it flew suddenly open whilst she was in bed. A child in another room cried out, "Oh da, I'm frightened," whereupon she hid her head under the bedclothes and saw nothing of the Green Lady.

Tudhoe Old Hall is precisely the kind of house one would expect to be haunted, and nobody will take it in its entirety. Apart from all the legends belonging to it, the fact is indisputable that a woman once poisoned an entire family within its walls, and this alone is sufficient to give it a gruesome reputation. Little is known of the ancient history of the building. Sir Hugh Gubyon was probably one of its tenants, and there is an early record that families named Tesedale and Hoton held lands in Tudhoe. The hall is now divided into three tenements. The rooms occupied by Mr. Simpson are large and comfortable, but above them are two lofts which appear to have been used at one time as sleeping apartments. The ceilings have fallen, revealing the stout

oaken roof with stone tiles, each one fastened with the shank bone of a sheep. The rooms on the floor below are panelled, and there are closets in the walls, and possibilities of several more hidden behind the panels and containing who knows what dead secrets. The panels in one of the rooms are filled in with oil paintings on canvas, of trees and flowers, and birds of unknown species. The pictures are fairly well executed, but only one of them is worthy of careful preservation, and this represents a priest in shovel hat and bands going full speed on horseback after a hare, with two dogs close on its track, the hall itself being in the background of the scene. Whoever was chaplain of Tudhoe at that period appears to have been a sporting parson. The panels in another of the rooms were once filled with pictures as well, but a tenant with no love for antiquities has torn out the pictures and replaced them with a neat wall paper at perhaps threepence per piece.

The hind's portion of the house contains a fine old staircase, broad but with a very low headway. Beneath is a gloomy arched cellar to which access is gained by a flight of stone steps, and in one of the rooms, probably the kitchen of the hall, there is an oaken ceiling beam richly carved, and covered by generations of vandals with countless coats of whitewash. Outside is the ancient bowling

green, now used as a tennis court, as level as the day it was completed, centuries ago—perhaps in the time of Elizabeth, when bowls were in fashion. The farm buildings adjoining are also of interest. There is a loft in one of the wings that was formerly used as a Catholic chapel. Some years ago the arched ceiling of lath and plaster gave way, and now no vestige of the chapel remains except the floor, the walls, the altar steps, and an ancient handrail with turned balusters. The old staircase is gone, the altar is gone, and even a little canopy that once covered the figure of a saint has been ruthlessly torn down.

Opposite the Old Hall there used at one time to be a ducking stool. This was a pole fixed in the pond, with a transverse beam upon it turning on a swivel, with a chain at the end of it. Any woman who caused strife in the village, or inter-meddled unlawfully in her neighbour's affairs, was fastened into the chain, and then the transverse pole was turned round, and the scolding or slanderous dame ducked in the pond. The penalty was imposed continually as part of the regular business of the Halmote Court, in fact the tenants of Shields were on one occasion actually fined for not providing a ducking stool for the village. There are people in Spennymoor of to-day who would gladly see this admirable institution revived.

Tudhoe has still one other ghost who must not be omitted, for it is the Old Gentleman himself. There is an oak blasted by the lightning on the road from the Five Lane Ends to Tudhoe Village, and it is said by those who have tried the experiment that if you walk nine times round the tree on a dark night you will see the devil, and if you go another four times round he will tell you where you are likely to go to. It is essential that you should neither speak nor laugh whilst the experiment is in progress. Many have commenced it bravely, but their courage generally wavers at the eighth time round. The local belief in this matter is so strong that many of the Tudhoe people prefer to travel at night time round by Tudhoe Colliery rather than pass the blasted oak.

This completes the list of the Tudhoe ghosts. There was a spurious ghost early in the century at Hett, but it turned out ultimately to be a pitman dressed in white. A few years back some senseless boys endeavoured to imitate his exploits by frightening nervous people at the Five Lane Ends. They were subsequently caught in the tunnel and soundly thrashed for their pains.

There is still one more ghost belonging to the locality, the famous Nicky-Nack ghost. Nicky-Nack was formerly a terribly lonely spot in the midst of a thick wood, and the story of the Nicky-Nack ghost

continued for many years to give it an uncanny reputation. The origin of the story appears to have come from the brain of an imaginative clodhopper, walking home one day with a loose heel plate on his boot. The heel plate kept going "Nicky-Nack, nicky-nack," and the sound terrified him. He started to run, and the sound seemed to him to say "Click and catch 'um, click and catch 'um." He fancied then that he was being chased by a ghost, who was prevented from getting at him by the running water that divides the fields at this point, and when he arrived in the village he spread the report that the Nicky-Nack wood was haunted. Some years later the story gained a new lease of life. The farmers of Tudhoe and their reapers were celebrating the harvest home at Tudhoe Mill with an uproarious "mell supper," when it was found that the whiskey had given out. The company subscribed for more, and a certain half-wit, a poor creature always ready to run errands, was sent to Sunderland Bridge for a fresh supply. He appears to have been away about three hours, and the thirsty souls around the table naturally began to grow impatient. One of them swore with a deep oath that he would go and bring him back by the lug, but on second thoughts he decided to personate the famous ghost. Accordingly he procured a sheet and set out for the wood. His thirsty friends

waited long for his return, but neither he nor the half-wit put in an appearance, and some of them went home in disgust. The others waited till day break, and were on the point of leaving when the poor half-wit rushed in amongst them, pale and trembling. He was asked if he had seen anything uncanny. "Aye, that aa have," he replied. "As aa was coming past the Nicky-Nack field a white ghost came out upon me, and aa was sair frettened; but when aa looked aa saw a black ghost ahint it, so aa yowled as loud as aa could to the black ghost to catch the white ghost, and the white ghost leuked about, and when it saw the black yen it screamed oot amain and tried to run away; but blackey was ower clivoor for't, and ran like a hatter, till it gat haud o' whitey, and ran away wiv him aalltogether."

Of course the foolish man was fleeing from his own shadow cast by the moonlight. He is said to have run towards Partnerships and must have fallen into an old shaft, for when the day dawned he was nowhere to be found. His companions discovered a few fragments of the sheet, but what had become of the man himself could never be ascertained.

Another singular tradition of the district relates to the occupier of Tudhoe Mill about the end of the last century. He is said to have been travelling

home from Durham one night when, looking up the Croxdale Bank, he saw a stiff built man trudging along the road about twenty paces ahead of him. He was rather glad than otherwise at the prospect of company upon a lonely road, and was hurrying forward to catch up with the man, when he found that the man quickened his own pace and kept at the same distance ahead of him all the way to Nicky-Nack. The miller was about to turn off through the gate into the field, and for a moment withdrew his eyes from the figure before him. When he looked again it was gone. Up to the day of his death he persisted that he had seen a ghost, but it is more than probable that the moon was again responsible for the apparition.

The woods at Nicky-Nack served as a convenient hiding place for footpads and highwaymen, in fact it was quite an adventure for anyone to go by the Chair Lane to Tudhoe on a dark night. Old Peter Simpson once ran a very narrow risk of his life there. He was driving back from Saturday's market at Durham with a heavy purse of silver, when a woman asked him for a lift as far as Tudhoe. He was rather reluctant to stop, but he told her to climb up behind and he would give her a hand. She passed up her basket, and was about to climb into the cart, when the poor old fellow discovered to his intense horror that the hand he

was grasping was certainly not the hand of a woman. By a happy inspiration he let his hat fall into the road and asked the "woman" to pick it up for him. Then he drove off and never stopped till he reached his house. When he got down from the cart he found that the basket contained nothing but a sharp dagger.

A few years ago there were rumours of a ghost at Tudhoe Colliery. Night after night it was seen by the men as they were going to the pit, a white figure appearing at the door of a particular house and then moving slowly down the road. Several of the miners actually went to their work by another way rather than encounter the apparition, but it turned out afterwards that the ghost was nothing but a jealous wife watching her husband. She was anxious to see that he went straight to his work, and so she followed him in her night dress.

TUDHOE VILLAGE.



AT one time there was a good deal of traffic through Tudhoe by the Brancepeth road across the ford, in fact there were two public houses in the village. The Green Tree is still in existence, but the George and Dragon was converted into a vicarage and used as such until the present vicarage was ready. Its first clerical tenant was the Rev. John Henry Blunt, curate of Brancepeth, who came to live at Tudhoe. He wanted a house to live in, and the old George and Dragon was the only place that could be found for him. As he was getting in his furniture a country bumpkin came into the house and called for a glass of ale. Mr. Blunt said quietly that he had not yet had his cask tapped, and the man saw that he had made a mistake. Tudhoe was formerly in Brancepeth parish, and services were held in the little school house on the village green until Holy Innocent's Church was built.

Mr. Blunt has attained great distinction since he left Tudhoe. He has written quite a number of

valuable theological works, and is continually being quoted as an authority on ecclesiastical law. He was a great favourite in the village, and full of a quiet humour that made him a pleasant companion. "Don't go away," he once said to a brother curate, "I am expecting the Archdeacon." "Who do you mean?" asked his friend. Mr. Blunt named another curate. "But why do you call him the Archdeacon?" "Because he makes such long visitations," was the reply, "he'll be here till three o'clock in the morning."

The Brancepeth ford was never a safe one, but it was always passable in summer time. Some years ago, however, a foolish lad, who persisted against all warnings in driving his cart through the river when in flood, was swept away by the torrent and drowned. The ford after this fell into disuse, and the banks are now silted up with sand, so that there is no possibility of passing it. It is hoped that before long the Councils representing the districts on each side of the river will open up the roadway once again. The drive from Tudhoe to Brancepeth is one of the pleasantest in all the country side. In former times there was a road through the Park to Brancepeth Church, but this was closed when Holy Innocent's Church was built. It is said that a party of school children from Tudhoe were once travelling home in a brake from Brancepeth, when

the wheels stuck fast in the middle of the river. There were three horses to the brake, but they failed to make it budge, and ultimately they finished by breaking the traces. The children had to be carried to dry land on the shoulders of their teachers.

The old school house of Tudhoe still exists in a dilapidated condition on the village green, but the little steeple is gone. It was built by the freeholders of Tudhoe, and is still their property, but for some time past it has practically been closed, and there are now a number of pit-fall cracks in the walls. It is a pity that this relic of the passing generation should be allowed to go to decay. At a trifling expense it might easily be transformed into a club house or reading room for the village. A new floor has just been laid down to make it available for dances.

Fifty years ago the master of Tudhoe School was an old pensioner named Wilkinson, who used to get drunk at regular intervals. Whenever he had been indulging too freely he would give the children a half-holiday, and sometimes he would bring his wife, Nanny, into the schoolroom and make her dance while he played the fiddle. She was a meek and quiet like body, and dared not disobey him. In spite, however, of his eccentricities he was by no means a bad master. One of his favourite scholars was Jacky Lister, who ultimately succeeded him, and became the last master of Tudhoe School.

John Lister was a bright and happy boy, but owing to a bodily infirmity he was debarred from the rough sports of boyhood, so that his leisure time was mainly spent with his books. He finished his education at the Durham Grammar School, and then went as a teacher to Newfield. From Newfield he went to Willington, from Willington to Spennymoor, and finally he settled at Tudhoe. He was a beautiful penman, a good mathematician, and a master of whom those who were privileged to be educated under him still speak with enthusiasm and affection. His school speedily became famous all over the country side, and regularly every Monday morning a fresh batch of scholars presented themselves, and Jacky was at his wits' end to know where to put them. A time came when, incredible as it may seem, he had no less than 300 children crowded into the little building on Tudhoe Green, in fact many of them were compelled to sit on the floor, there being no room for them in the desks. Lads remained with him up to the age of 17 and 18 in some cases, and presents were being continually brought to him and laid on his desk—eggs, butter, fruit, flowers, cream, sausages, chickens, and sometimes at Christmas time, a goose. Yet he was one of the cruellest of tyrants to his scholars. He was a firm believer in the efficacy of corporal punishment, his favourite weapon being a hazel stick.

Sometimes he would send a boy out to cut one for him, and in the meantime he was content with a ruler, or anything else that was handy. At times he would fling his ruler wherever there was a noise and call upon one of the boys to bring it back and be thrashed with it. His floggings were no mere child's play. He has been known in his fury to seize a boy by the hair of his head and swing him round and round. The ruler was a long flat one with a bevelled edge, and his usual method of administering corporal punishment with it was to catch the boy with his lame arm, loose down his nether garments, get his head between his legs, and then lay on with the edge of the ruler. His own children attended the school as well, and he thrashed them almost more unmercifully than the rest of the scholars. One of his own lads, in the midst of his agony, would sometimes appeal to him first as a parent, and then as his schoolmaster. "Oh father, please don't," he would shout, "Mr. Lister, sir, please *don't*." Even the girls came in for a taste of the ruler, but the old fellow had a sufficient sense of propriety to take them into the porch for the purpose.

The ruler served many purposes. A dunce was sometimes made to stand with one foot on the end of it, and every time he allowed it to fall the hazel stick came down upon his shoulders.

Of course the master could not be expected to



JOHN LISTER AND SOME OF HIS SCHOLARS.

teach so large a number of children without help, and so he availed himself of the ingenious monitorial system invented by Joseph Lancaster, and brought to such perfection in after years by the late John Thomas Crossley, whereby the scholars, having thoroughly mastered a subject up to a certain point, were set to teach it up to that point to the younger children. The monitors came in for the hazel stick just as often as their pupils, in fact if one of the boys made a blot upon his copy-book the monitor was punished as well as the delinquent. No wonder that Jacky turned out such splendid writers.

On a fine day the children were taken out on to the green and seated on the grass, whilst the village geese walked up and down the rows gravely inspecting them. It is greatly to be feared that this interfered somewhat with the attention of the children, and there were times when the ruler travelled impartially along an entire row.

There was, however, one day in the year when the school was given up to the excitement of utter lawlessness, and that was Royal Oak Day. In conformity with the recognised custom the boys barricaded themselves in the schoolroom and barred out the master. Old Jacky was furious; he yelled at them through the keyhole and swore the most terrible vengeance. Finally he would obtain assistance and force the door. Some of the boys escaped

by the window, but the rest were thrashed just as he could catch them, some of them writhing on the top of the desks. On one barring-out day nobody would say who was the ringleader, and so he thrashed everybody in the school.

Although the system of Jacky Lister was entirely different from that adopted by Mr. Wackford Squeers, the following characteristic speech is one that might very well have come from that renowned schoolmaster himself. "Boys," he would say, "we're going to have a half-holiday this afternoon, my brother Tom's going to take up a field of turnips, and we'll go and help him." His method of teaching was also quite characteristic. Supposing him to be teaching grammar, he would shout out to one of the boys, "You nasty, dirty, abominable, idle, vagabond, scoundrel, villain, you, *what's a noun?*" The boy would reply meekly, "Name of anything, sir." "Name one, you donkey," shouted the old fellow. "Stick, sir." "Go to the top of the class. That boy will make his mark."

He was proud as a peacock of any of his boys who did him credit; in fact, he is said to have carried a supply of sweets in his pocket, which he dispensed as a special mark of favour to the boys who pleased him. The greatest happiness he knew was to exhibit his prize pupils to a visitor. The gentry of the district always made a point of

calling at the school whenever they passed through the village, and the beautiful handwriting of the children came in for special praise. These were the days before the characterless stuff known as "Civil Service hand" came into vogue. Penmanship is fast becoming one of the lost arts.

Mr. Lister was very popular among all classes in the district. He acted as assistant overseer for many years, was secretary to the Tudhoe Flower Show, leader of the choir at Tudhoe, and a frequent singer at the local concerts. In the later years of his life his disabled arm gave him great pain. It was the ultimate cause of his death. He had decided after careful consideration to go to Edinburgh to have it operated upon, but he feared when he went that he would never return, and old Peter Simpson, who was a devoted friend of his, and never looked up after his death, waddled over the green on his crutches to say good-bye, and both were greatly affected at the parting. Nevertheless, he kept up his spirits as well as he was able, and on the very night of his arrival in Edinburgh he sang a rollicking comic song. He died under the operation on the 8th of August, 1877, at the age of 57, and his body was brought to Tudhoe for burial. People came from all parts to attend the funeral, and the scene at the graveside will never be forgotten by those who met there to do honour to his memory.

One of the picturesque objects of Tudhoe fast falling into decay is the old mill, for which Sir Hugh Gubyon drew water from the Wood Vue fishpond. In its later years it was used as a paper mill, but the advent of steam was the death-blow to the paper making industry in the villages, and forty-seven years ago the pretty old wheel came to a standstill, and has since been broken up. The last tenant of Tudhoe Mill was James Cook, a man still hale and hearty, though greatly advanced in age. He recollects the time when there were quite a number of paper mills in the locality, in fact the beck that runs from Kelloe Churchyard to Croxdale was utilised for no less than six paper mills and five corn mills. One of the best of them is still to be seen on the road from Metal Bridge to Coxhoe. Wages in these days averaged nine shillings a week, but twelve and even fourteen shillings were paid at the paper mills, and eighteen shillings was reckoned an unusually high wage. The paper made in the district was mainly brown and whitey brown paper, manufactured from rope brought by pack-horses from Sunderland.

Tudhoe has greatly altered in recent years. Singular to say it is not all Salvin property. There are still a few small freeholds in the village, and some of the houses built upon them are of recent date. Houses have also been built upon the common, a gross infringement of the public rights,

tolerated before Urban Councils came into existence. The village is one of the healthiest in the County, and many of its inhabitants have attained a good old age. The Pickerings, who have lived in the place for generations, point with pardonable pride to the tombstone of a centenarian of their family who was buried at Brancepeth at the age of 101.

The people of Tudhoe are very proud of their Flower Show. It is reputed to be the oldest in the County, and was held for the first two years at Croxdale in conjunction with the district around Sunderland Bridge. But the people of Tudhoe wished it to be held at Tudhoe and Croxdale alternately, and, the people of Sunderland Bridge objecting, they decided to run a flower show entirely of their own. The project was taken up with enthusiasm in the village, and now it is the great annual event of the district. Excursions come into the town, and brakes are plying all day long between Spennymoor and Tudhoe. The show ground is filled with booths and rustic exhibitions, and the people of the locality, no matter how upper-crust they may feel themselves on other days of the year, on this particular day unbend sufficiently to revel in the delight of cocoa-nut shies and roundabouts, side by side with very low class people. There was formerly an agricultural show held at Tudhoe as well, but this has merged into the Flower Show.

H

There is one other institution of Tudhoe that must not be overlooked, the famous Rugby Football Club. People come from all parts of the County to see the men play upon their own ground, and the field in Tudhoe Grange is a sight worth seeing whenever a great match is in progress. The Tudhoe Club has already succeeded in carrying off the Durham Cup, and its performances are beginning to be of almost national interest.

WHITWORTH.



ONE of the prettiest walks in Spennymoor is the walk to Whitworth Church either by Whitworth Lane or across the Park by the ancient bridle road. The church is situate close to the Hall, and is approached by a charming avenue. It stands in what is perhaps the prettiest churchyard in the County of Durham, an ideal place to be buried in, and the building, although of entirely modern construction, is so perfectly in harmony with its surroundings that it makes quite an effective picture no matter from what point it is viewed.

The chapel of olden times fell into decay towards the commencement of the present century, and a hideous looking structure was erected in its place in the year 1808, but when the Rev. Arthur Duncombe Shafto, now rector of Brancepeth, came in 1847 to Whitworth he was so distressed at having to minister to his parishioners in a building so unlike a church that he at once commenced to raise funds for a thorough renovation. Shortly afterwards,

however, he resigned the living, so that the work of restoration devolved upon his successor, the Rev. Charles Carr, who built the chancel and vestry, restored the nave, and removed the ugly high backed pews, including the great square pew of the Shaftos, which was so screened with curtains that the occupants were visible to the minister alone, and only then from the pulpit. The roof was altered from a flat and ceiled one to a high pitched ecclesiastical form, the former sash windows were replaced by narrow lancet windows, and a bell turret and porch were added to complete the design. For many years it has been a labour of love to the present incumbent, the Rev. Edward Abercrombie Wilkinson, to improve the church and particularly to decorate the chancel. The walls have been finely panelled in oak, and the chancel floor is now laid with delicate mosaic. The ceiling of the chancel has been richly ornamented, the choir stalls have been finely carved, and the panels of the old reredos have been replaced by a beautiful painting of the Crucifixion.

The eastern windows of the church are inaccurate in design, the two windows at the side appearing to crowd the central window uncomfortably at the shoulders. The stonework is quite plumb, so that this unusual phenomenon is merely an optical illusion. The glass in these windows is richly

coloured, and the waving leaves of the trees outside give it quite a prismatic effect on a bright summer's day. But the finest windows in the church are the two on the northern side of the nave, one of them representing the "Good Shepherd," dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Charles Carr, and the other, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," put in at the expense of Mrs. Shafto to the memory of her late husband, who died in 1889. The colours of these windows are beautiful in tone and exquisitely blended.

The Rev. Charles Carr was greatly loved in the parish. He was noble and dignified in his bearing, and everyone treated him with the greatest respect. During his long incumbency he not only completed the restoration of Whitworth Church, but built St. Paul's Church at Spennymoor as well. His death was a sad blow to the people of Spennymoor. His wife had died of typhoid fever just three weeks before, and after the funeral he went to Whitburn to recruit his shattered health, but never recovered the terrible sorrow of her death.

There is a deeply cut tombstone on the floor of the nave of Whitworth Church bearing the arms of the Shafto family. It is the entrance to the family vault, and contains a number of coffins, one of them standing upright. The last to be buried in this vault was the grandfather of the present squire, a

fine old English gentleman. After the churches were closed for burials a large vault was built in a corner of the churchyard in anticipation of the early demise of his widow, who was then more than 90 years of age. Singular to say her daughter-in-law preceded her, and she ultimately attained the great age of 102, at least this is the age stated on the brass tablet to her memory in Whitworth Church, although there are many who maintain that her true age was 105. She was an inveterate card player almost up to the last, and never retired for the night without a rubber of whist. Her faculties were so marvellously preserved that she was able on her hundredth birthday to sign her name in a strong and vigorous hand, more like that of a young woman than of a centenarian, and she was careful in all her costumes to follow the changes of fashion. It is said that shortly before she died she was wheeled in a bath-chair into the park at Brancepeth to witness a Sunday school treat, and the sleeves of one of the teachers so took her fancy that she insisted upon having a pair made for herself in the same style.

The Hall at Whitworth is beautifully placed, just above the river. A handsome deer park sprinkled with luxuriant oaks stretches to the south and east, and the view opens only eastward over the vale of the Wear, while the soft upland slopes

of the park and the high ground towards Merrington confine the prospect on the south.

Whitworth Hall was formerly one of the best family mansions in the County, but it was unfortunately destroyed by fire in 1876, the only portion saved being the library and the kitchens. It remained in ruins until 1891, when Mrs. Shafto transformed what was left of the building into its present condition. The Hall of to-day cannot be compared with its predecessor for size and appearance, but its internal arrangements are far more tasteful and convenient, and the reception hall and drawing-room are among the finest rooms in the county. The library was added to the hall by Robert Eden Duncombe Shafto, the husband of the lady of the hundred years, and is a worthy memorial of his tenure of the estate. There is a full-length portrait of him above the chimney piece, and the shelves contain a choice collection of books accumulated by him from all parts of the world. He used to entertain royally at Whitworth, and kept up quite a large establishment. The hall resounded with merriment, and the young people of Windlestone and Brancepeth used to revel in amateur theatricals and all kinds of fun. There was a small brewery attached to the building, and everybody who had business at the house was given a horn of ale. The butler of that period was fond of

practical jokes, and sometimes he would bring out Whitworth ale that had stood for 25 years and give it to the lads to drink, with the result that they staggered into the nearest hedge and went to sleep until the effects of the ale had passed. After the old squire's death his widow continued for a time to keep up the traditional hospitality of the house, but the terrible expense incurred by her son, the late squire, in his Parliamentary contests impoverished the estate and made it necessary for the family to economise. Lord Rosebery was a frequent visitor at Whitworth when he was a lad, and one of the stalwart Liberals of Spennymoor tells with pride that he once saw the future Prime Minister in the height of high spirits leap right over a donkey.

It is said that the late Robert Duncombe Shafto spent no less than £100,000 in his attempt to capture the Southern Division of the County in 1832, but all to no purpose. He attained his ambition, however, in 1847, being elected for the Northern Division, and sat in Parliament for quite a number of years. One of the treasures of Whitworth is the arm-chair in which he was carried in triumph through the streets of Durham on the last occasion when the ancient custom of "Chairing the Member" was observed. It was plentifully bedecked with party ribbons, and his enthusiastic supporters were so eager to possess

themselves of a handful that he narrowly escaped being pitched on to the heads of the crowd.

There are several family portraits at Whitworth, notably the one of "Bonnie Bobbie," by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as can be seen by the scallop shells with which he always ornamented his frames. Another interesting painting is that of a soldier on horseback, in a uniform long since lost from the Service. This is Mr. John Methold, of Beamish, whose name appears in so many of the Spennymoor title deeds. There are also portraits of the late Robert Dnncombe Shafto and his widow, the present Mrs. Shafto, and facing her is her daughter, Mrs. Wilkinson, while close by there is a fine picture of the present squire, Mr. Robert Charles Duncombe Shafto, with a diminutive Burmese pony by his side, taken when he was a pretty little boy five years of age. But the most charming of the family pictures is a crayon drawing of three little boys, a characteristic and life-like piece of work. Another of the treasures of Whitworth that must not be overlooked is the fine marble bust of Lord Brougham, the famous advocate who defended Queen Caroline, and afterwards did so much in this country for the advancement of popular education. He was a connection by marriage of the Shafto family, and stood as godfather for Mrs. Wilkinson. The bust at Whitworth was the work of a young and rising sculptor who wished to make a name for

himself. Lord Brougham, one of the kindest and most loveable of men, was only too pleased to be of service to anyone, and gladly gave as many sittings as the young sculptor needed, with the result that this particular bust is perhaps the most faithful likeness of him ever obtained.

The Park at Whitworth is divided into three portions, the High, the Middle, and the Low, the Low Park being a preserve for deer of a very fine breed. James Adamson was the butcher who formerly prepared the venison for the hall table, and there were times when he experienced great difficulty in picking out one of the deer, because they usually go in herds, in fact the only safe method was to hide inside a cart or up a tree, and shoot directly a favourable opportunity presented itself.

The trees on the Whitworth lawn are some of the finest in the country, the beech trees being particularly notable. The main entrance to the Park was formerly a little way above the Church, but later on^a it was removed to Newtown and a pair of lodge-keeper's rooms erected on each side of the gateway, tiny castellated buildings of no particular interest in design, but infinitely preferable to the squat and ugly lodge that has since taken their place. The destruction of these tiny rooms has robbed Whitworth Lane of one of its most picturesque features. Newtown was probably so called to distinguish it from the old town



FROM A SKETCH BY THOMAS JOHN BUNGAY.

WHITWORTH PARK.

of Whitworth, the houses close to the Hall which were afterwards demolished. The Newtown houses are quaint little cottages, with tiny farmyards attached to them, and they are said to have been built as almshouses for the retainers of the family.


At one time a rumour was spread abroad that there were ghosts at Whitworth. Strange lights were to be seen in the churchyard, and people began to be afraid to pass it by night. But ultimately someone with a scientific turn ascertained that the mysterious lights were merely the Will-o'-the-Wisp or Jack-o'-Lantern, and whenever it was rumoured that the lights were visible, quite a number of persons wandered down Whitworth Lane to witness the singular sight. The lights came in quick succession, darting like flashes across the churchyard. The phenomenon can still be seen at Whitworth on a favourable night.

Whitworth has been very quiet since the time of the fire, and Mrs. Shafto prefers when she comes to the neighbourhood to stay in the house at Whitworth Gate, called the Cottage, instead of at the Hall. The Cottage was formerly the farmhouse of the Home farm. The present squire lives in London, and is scarcely known in the place, but there are many in Spennymoor who remember him as a youth.

Whitworth Vicarage formerly stood within the Park, but it fell into bad repair, and when the Rev. R. Gray came to the parish he was compelled to

take up his residence in Durham. In 1847 it was taken down and a more commodious building erected on a pleasant site overlooking the Wear, about a quarter of a mile from the Church. Mr. Gray was the predecessor of Mr. Arthur Shafto at Whitworth. He wrote soon after his arrival:—"All this district has been much neglected. I found a great portion of my parish and of Byers Green little better than infidels, and I have reason to believe that Tudhoe is much in the same state, with a little leaven of Romanism." Mr. Gray built the National School at Spennymoor, and did much good in the parish. He ultimately became Bishop of Cape Town.

WHITWORTH COLLIERY.

“PENNY-MOOR,” says Mr. Mackenzie in his “History of Durham,” published sixty-three years ago, “was an ancient waste or common, supposed to have extended nearly from Auckland Park or the foot of Westerton Hill betwixt Merrington and Whitworth and betwixt Hett and Tudhoe till it approached the Wear, near Sunderland Bridge, but the name is now confined to a single house and farmhold.” Mr. Mackenzie omitted to add that it possessed a public institution in the shape of a pinfold or pound for stray cattle that stood somewhere about the site of the present gasworks. At about the same period there were also a number of temporary huts in the locality, but they were only for the use of the navvies engaged in making the railway from Port Clarence to Tow Law. This is one of the oldest lines in the kingdom, having been opened for traffic just three months before Queen Victoria ascended the throne. It was a private speculation of the Hartlepool Dock Company, and for many years was only a mineral

line, the traffic from Toddhills to Tow Law being worked by haulage. The old engine house at Toddhills is still standing with its great square chimney by its side, but the rails have long since been removed, and the railway is now a footroad to Sunnybrow.

It was in 1839 that Spennymoor first sprang into existence. The Durham County Coal Company sank a pit at Whitworth, close to the Whitworth Pit Cottages, and called it Merrington Colliery. They spent more than £40,000 over the enterprise, but somehow all their undertakings came to grief. The first coals were drawn on July 10th, 1841, yet in 1842 they abandoned the pit altogether, and all that remains of the capital sunk by them is the tall stone engine-house now standing in ruins among the wreck of the Whitworth coke ovens. Shortly afterwards the Colliery passed into the possession of the West Dock Company, who then sank the Whitworth Shaft and built an enormous number of coke ovens, but apparently they lost money over it as well, for later on the Colliery came into the hands of Mr. Richard Sheraton Johnson, of Sherburn Hall. Mr. Johnson was afterwards joined in partnership by his brother-in-law, Mr. T. M. Reay, a man who rose from the ranks to be one of Spennymoor's most respected townsmen. For a quarter of a century the colliery prospered, and the partners made a large fortune out

of it; in fact, it is said that for one year's working they divided no less a sum than £70,000 as net profit. Mr. Reay lived for a time at Water Slack, but in 1861 he built for himself the beautiful house in Whitworth Lane, now owned by the Weardale Company. Unfortunately, however, he fell upon bad times; the colliery at Castle Eden and the iron-works at Stockton took away a great deal of the trade, and then came the dreadful period of depression between 1876 and 1880. Misfortunes came thick and fast, so that in 1882 Mr. Reay was compelled to lay in the colliery altogether. At last all hope of its re-opening was abandoned, and the sad work of dismantlement commenced. Mr. Reay sank a new shaft into the top seam, and tried to work it on a small scale, but he was hampered by want of capital, and finally he decided, much to the regret of his townspeople, to leave for ever the scenes of his former prosperity, and take up his home at Norton. His interest in the colliery was sold to Messrs. Brown and Oliver, the owners of the tiny Rock Colliery, near the Four Lane Ends, and they are now working the Low Main Seam, but the coal is very poor, and the seam is only a very thin one, twenty-five fathoms from the surface. The massive engine houses and coke ovens are still in ruins, and the large area once covered by the Merrington and Whitworth Collieries is now a melancholy scene of desolation.

The opening of Whitworth Pit was of necessity followed by the erection in various directions of houses for the men to live in. There are still a few of the old pit houses in the streets at the back of the High Street. They were constructed roughly of stone, and consisted of two rooms and a loft; in fact, they were more like piggeries than human habitations, and many of them are to-day used as stables.

There appears to have been a difficulty in the early days of Spennymoor in acquiring land for building sites on the Shafto and Salvin estates, and eventually the nearest land available for colliery houses was the land in the neighbourhood of Merrington Lane, now known as Jerusalem. How it came by that name is a mystery. The nearest approach to a plausible explanation is that an old local preacher was once shifting his furniture into the new pit rows when the cart stuck in the mud at the street end and refused to budge. The old man was compelled, with the help of his friends, to take the things off the cart and carry them, and he is said to have remarked that "it was worse nor Jerusalem, it could neither be reached by horse nor donkey." The first of the old pit rows were built in a field, and there can be little doubt that before the roads were made it would be difficult to reach them with a cart-load of furniture. They are now almost all demolished, and the Old Post Office Street, though of later date,

is practically the only remaining relic of that period. Up to that time the only house in the locality was a cottage of which the ruins were lately to be seen opposite Coulson's foundry. It was occupied by Katie Rickerby, and had a little garden attached to it.

The pit people baked their bread in large brick ovens built at the corners of the streets. The fuel was generally wood, and the ovens were washed out with a rag on the end of a stick, called a "spiel." The loaves generally weighed about three-quarters of a stone, and were all marked by their owners to facilitate identification.

The miners used to get their coal just as they do now, but it was not deposited at their doors. Each day a load was tipped at the end of the street, and the women would gather round it with their shulls (shovels) and scrape as much as they could into a little heap for themselves, whilst the men stood at the doors and laughed. An old Welshwoman who used to live in Pit Street, Spennymoor, Jenny Evans by name, was never strong enough in the later years of her life to annex so big a heap as the younger women, and so she was compelled to lie flat down on the load and take all that she could cover. The pit people were of course drawn to the district from all parts of the country, and particularly from Wales and Lancashire; in fact, there is a row

of cottages at Tudhoe called Welsh Row, because it was built to accommodate a number of Welsh families who came to Whitworth Colliery.

The pit people lived a wild and horrible kind of life, herded together in the wretched pigsties that were run up for them. Money was plentiful, and from Friday to Monday, Jerusalem became a small edition of hell. The people sat out in the open all night, with candles stuck in clay upon the ground, drinking, cursing, and quarrelling. The public houses never closed their doors; there was no closing-time, and the men were so eager to commence their debauch that many of them never troubled even to take off their pit clothes, and were to be found on the Monday lying helplessly drunk on the waste land that used to adjoin the old Vulcan Inn. There were no schools for the children, no churches, no chapels, no police to keep order, nothing but ignorance and depravity. These were the "good old times."

The men used to run donkey races along Weardale Street, and on one occasion a real race meeting was held at the back of Half Moon Lane. A story is told of the Jerusalem Races that anyone is at liberty to believe or doubt just as he pleases. An old pot dealer drove his cart on to the course, and the pitmen were wondering what had brought him there, when he got down from the cart and commenced to loose and strip the horse. It was the

veriest old crock, and nobody expected for one moment that it was intended to run it. However, when the old fellow had fished a saddle and bridle out of the cart, there was great speculation as to who was to be the jockey. The old man himself was far too fat and unwieldy; nevertheless, when the bell sounded it was he who climbed into the saddle and went on to the course. The people were uproarious in appreciating the humour of the situation, and were only too ready to bet to any extent with those "in the know" who were willing to back the horse. Directly it started it became a new creature. All its former dejectedness was gone, and in spite of the weight it carried, it won easily.

The pitmen were bound for a year, and on the "binding days" beer was distributed in barrels by the overmen, and could actually be seen running down the channels of the streets. The bond was read by the manager of the pit to the assembled crowd of men and boys, and if they approved of its terms there was a rush to be the first to be bound. The first man generally received a sovereign, the second ten shillings, the next few, five shillings, and the rest, two shillings or a shilling. At times the men would disapprove of the conditions and then the whole of them would turn away in a body without being bound.

The boys went into the pit at a very early age.

The ex-manager of Tudhoe Colliery, Mr. William Johnson, started at the age of seven. They commenced as trappers and as soon as they were old enough they were set on as putters. The hours too were terribly long, some of the boys never seeing daylight during the winter months, except on the Sunday. They went in at five in the morning and remained down the pit till six at night. Safety lamps were used occasionally, but the miners mostly worked by the light of candles stuck in clay, or into a little wooden midgey with a hole at the bottom for the candle and a hole at the top to let out the smoke. The trapper boys varied the monotony of their long stay in the pit by playing "droppy candle," the object being to drop the candle through the hole at the top into the hole at the bottom. As Christmas time came near, they economised their candles for the "tyup," a kind of Christmas tree covered with lighted candles, which they carried round the public houses and ultimately sold to the highest bidder. They were allowed seven or eight candles a day, the candles running about forty to the pound, and they would resort to all kinds of devices and even sit in the dark to save candles for the "tyup."

It may readily be imagined that the little lads were inclined to play truant now and again, and the managers of the collieries were compelled to provide

various enticements to keep them at their work. Sometimes it would be the promise of candles for the "tyup," sometimes they would get up foot races when a hundred score of tubs had been drawn, sometimes prizes were offered to the boys who could catch with their teeth a number of apples floating in a tub of water—"ducky-apple" it was called. Sometimes they were blindfolded and set to catch a man covered with ribands, the prize being five shillings, and there are men still living at Spenny-moor who remember taking part as lads in the brutal and barbarous sport known as the "cock-hunt." The keeker at Whitworth would take the lads into a field that now forms part of the Victoria Park, and would set them with their hands tied behind their backs to catch a cock with their teeth. The poor thing was driven all over the field until it became exhausted. It was generally more dead than alive by the time it was caught, for the winner had not only to catch it with his teeth, but to fling it over his head as well, so that the lads in their struggles frequently fell on the top of it. The manager of the Colliery provided the cock, and after the hunt was over the keeker would take the boys to the nearest public house and treat them to beer.

Before leaving the customs of the Whitworth pit lads it would be a pity to omit a reference to the "Guisers," although guising or mumming is by no

means peculiar to the locality, but still prevails in many parts of England. "Guisers" are persons disguised, and the boys of Spennymoor conform to the ancient tradition by blackening their faces and wearing masks if they are able to afford them. It was formerly considered to be unlucky to refuse admission to the guisers, but they are now looked upon as more or less of a nuisance. Guising is fast dying out and it is now almost impossible to obtain an accurate version of the performance. There are seven prominent characters in the play, three actors unnamed, King George, who generally wears a crown, Johnny Funny, dressed as a woman (the counterpart of the "Bessy" of the Sword dancers), and the Doctor. The boys sometimes dress themselves in fantastic costumes, but generally they content themselves with wearing their clothes turned inside out. The following may be taken as a very fair blending of several versions of the play. At any rate it is sufficiently complete and intelligible for any of the young folks who are anxious to keep up old customs.

1st Actor : Good evening, friends and neighbours all, once
 more we're glad to meet you,
 A merry Christmas and a happy New Year
 We greet you.

2nd Actor : I open the door, I enter in,
 I hope the battle will soon begin;
 Stir up the fire and make a light,
 For in this house shall be a fight,
 If you don't believe the words I say,
 Step in, King George, and clear the way.

King George : In steps King George, King George is my name,
Sword and pistol by my side, I hope to win the
game.

2nd Actor : The game sir, the game, 'tis not within your power,
I'll slash thee into mincemeat in less than half-an-
hour.

King George : How can'st thou ?

2nd Actor : My body is made of iron, my heart is made of
steel,
My hands are made of knucklebones, I challenge
thee to the field.

King George : Who, sir ?

2nd Actor : I, sir !

King George : Take your sword and try, sir.

They fight with wooden swords.

4th Actor : Fight on, fight on, my gallant boys,
And give us room to rhyme,
For in this house we'll show you,
That it is Christmas time.

The 2nd Actor falls, and is caught by the 4th Actor, who kneels
and rests the head of the 2nd Actor upon his knee.

4th Actor : Alas ! alas ! what hast thou done,
Thou'st killed thy brother's only son.

King George : Send for the £10 doctor.

4th Actor : There is no £10 doctor.

King George : Send for the £20 doctor.

4th Actor : There is no £20 doctor.

King George : One hundred pounds for a doctor !

Doctor : Here steps in old doctor Brown,
The best old doctor in the town.

King George : Who made you the best old doctor in the town ?

Doctor : By my travels.

King George : Where did you travel ?

Doctor : England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales,
Italy, Sicily, France, and Spain,
Three times round and back again.

King George : What can you cure ?

Doctor : Anything.

King George : Can you bring a dead man to life again ?

Doctor : I can. I have a little bottle in my pocket
That goes tic-tac,
Rise up dead Jack.

He raises the head of the 2nd Actor and places the bottle to his lips.

Take a drink out of my little bottle
And let this go down your thrittle-throttle.

The 2nd Actor revives.

All sing : Our brother's come to life again,
We will never fight no more,
We will be as kind as brothers,
As ever we were before ;
With pockets full of money and cellars full of beer,
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New
Year.

2nd Actor : Once I was dead, but now I'm alive
(recovering) Blest be the doctor who made me revive.

Johnny Funny : Here comes in old Johnny Funny,
I'm the man that gathers the money ;
The roads are very clarty, my shoes are very thin,
I keep a little hairy purse to put the money in ;
If you have no copper, silver will do,
If you haven't a penny, a ha'penny will do,
If you haven't a ha'penny, a farthing will do,
If you haven't a farthing, God bless you.

To keep things going whilst the money is being collected the actors step forward one after another and sing a verse of a popular song, all joining in the

chorus, and among some of them it is the custom to bring in a man with a broom, who says :—


In come I, little Devil-doubt,
If I don't get money I'll sweep you all out ;
Money I want and money I'll have,
If I don't get money I'll sweep you all to your grave.

Another character occasionally introduced is Beelzebub, better known in these degenerate days as "Belgium-bug."

Here comes in old Beelzebub,
Over my shoulder I carry my club,
In my hand my frying pan,
I think myself a jolly old man ;
A jolly old man I ought to be,
I have two sons as big as thee,
One is tall, the other is small,
I think myself above them all.

The performance generally concludes with a fight outside amongst the boys to settle how the money is to be divided.

THE IRONWORKS.

OR a period of twelve years the only industry of any note in Spennymoor was the Whitworth Colliery. There was a little blacksmith's shop at the corner of Oxford Street that ultimately developed into "Geldard's," and there was a little foundry at Merrington Lane that ultimately developed into Coulson's, but the great ironworks of the Weardale Iron and Coal Company were not commenced until 1853.

Mr. Geldard began as a smith, and gradually extended his business until he was mainly employed in making tubs and wagons for the neighbouring collieries. One of his men was the notorious Dirty Matt, a man who did good work in his younger days, but afterwards became a half-wit. The boys used to tease him, and often he would rush out at them with red hot iron in his tongs yelling "Blue murder," but the little imps were too quick for him. Mr. Geldard was a skilful workman, and in course of time he earned a high reputation for his kitchen ranges; in fact, there is scarcely an old range to be

found in the district that was not made at Geldard's. The business outgrew the little shop in the High Street, and was removed to the White House Foundry, close to the Four Lane Ends, but unfortunately Mr. Geldard became involved in a long and costly law-suit with the Shaftos over a right of way. This was the precursor of a long series of misfortunes that lasted out his life and have come down to his sons. The business was afterwards transferred to Tudhoe Grange, but it has never prospered, and there is reason to fear that this industry, which once gave so much promise, may eventually die out entirely.

The foundry at Merrington Lane was commenced by an old fellow named Willy Dodds, who came from Bedburn. He used to drive through to Spenny-moor in a little flat cart, seated on a leathern spring suspended from two uprights, and being very stout he made rather a quaint object. He drove his gallo-way with a walking stick that he could split right down the middle, and when he was ready to get out of the cart he separated the two halves and used them to walk with. For many years the foundry was closed up, but it was ultimately acquired by the late Matthew Coulson, whose name will long be remembered in the district in connection with the ill-fated ironworks afterwards established by him on the opposite side of the road. The foundry is still in

active operation, but the ironworks are now at a standstill. For a time the firm enjoyed a prosperous career, having acquired something of a reputation for bridge nails and rivet iron, and quite a new town grew up in the neighbourhood of Merrington Lane. At one period Messrs. Coulson employed no less than 230 men, but year by year the almost universal adoption of steel in place of iron began to tell heavily upon the puddling industry, and the partners, being unable to face the keen competition of larger and better appointed establishments, were compelled by lack of orders to allow their mills to lie idle day after day until the distress among the workpeople in the vicinity was such that the "Little Works," as they were called, began to be christened the "Dry Bread" Works. The people, however, clung desperately to the place so long as the faintest hope of a revival in trade survived,—even throughout the terrible strike of 1892 that strangled so many establishments of a far greater type,—but ultimately, to the intense relief of the tradespeople of Spennymoor, the firm decided to close their puddling furnaces and rolling mills altogether. The half-starved people of Merrington Lane were compelled to turn elsewhere for work, and since then their condition has greatly improved.

The name of the "Little Works" was to distinguish Messrs. Coulson's establishment from the "Great" Works, which were established in 1853 by



CHARLES ATTWOOD.

the Weardale Iron and Coal Company, Limited. This company was founded by the renowned banking firm of Baring. Mr. Charles Attwood, a mineralogist of distinction, happened one day to be walking in the neighbourhood of Stanhope, when he came across the queer little furnace erected in Stanhope Burn by Mr. Rippon to smelt a substance called "rider ore," an ore of iron commonly found with the lead ore, and thrown out by the lead miners, to whom it gave much trouble. He at once appreciated the immense possibilities of his discovery, and forthwith he set to work, with the help of the Barings, to secure mining leases of all the land in the Manors of Stanhope and Wolsingham. His next step was to erect a blast furnace at Tow Law. The result surpassed his most sanguine hopes, and in 1845 he built four more blast furnaces, and bought up and leased mines of ironstone and coal in the neighbourhood of Tow Law wherever he could succeed in obtaining them. In 1853 he decided to launch out still further, and so he established the Tudhoe Ironworks to work the Weardale pig produced at Tow Law. At first two forges and two mills were sufficient, but the quality of the iron produced by the company was such that orders began to flow in thick and fast, and three years later it became necessary to erect two additional forges.

Charles Attwood was a friend of the great Sir

Henry Bessemer, who discovered the wonderful process by which iron could be converted into steel at an almost nominal expense compared with the great cost of the processes in use up to that time. At first his experiments were a failure, but after three years of incessant perseverance and an expenditure of more than £10,000, he succeeded in bringing his process very near to perfection. Some of the earliest of the steel ingots turned out at Bessemer's works, in Sheffield, were sent to Tudhoe to be rolled, and despite the adverse criticism to be heard on every side, Charles Attwood determined to give the new process a fair trial. In 1861 he erected under the supervision of the inventor a small plant consisting of four 50 cwt. converters, arranged upon the four points of a revolving cross-shaped frame, complete with blowing engines, hydraulic cranes, furnaces, and cupolas, and the very first ingots made at Tudhoe by the new process were rolled into rails to be laid across the High Level Bridge at Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Bessemer process has long since been superseded by the Siemens-Martin process, but the old converters can still be seen standing silent and forsaken in one of the large buildings attached to the Works. They are of a pear-shaped construction and are among the most picturesque contrivances that have ever been invented for mechanical purposes.



THE BLAST FURNACES.

In spite of the growing popularity of steel the Weardale company continued nevertheless to send large quantities of iron to the market, so that in 1880, whilst there were 2,000 tons of steel produced at the Tudhoe works, there were still 17,000 tons of iron. This was all changed by the Siemens-Martin process, and now the quantity of steel turned out at the Ironworks cannot fall far short of 50,000 tons a year, and the output is about to be immensely increased.

Two blast furnaces were erected at Tudhoe, each of them capable of turning out 700 tons of pig iron per week. For many years they were used to smelt Cleveland ores from the Weardale Company's mines near Guisbrough, but these mines having been abandoned, they are now used for ores of richer quality from Spain and elsewhere.

The Siemens-Martin furnaces are fed by gas and hot air, and the valves are reversed every half hour. In order to obtain regularity in this respect a large bell is sounded at the proper time by electric connection with the clock in the office of the Steelworks' manager. There are forty puddling furnaces at the Works, but Siemens' steel has to a great extent done away with the puddlers' art, and many of the puddlers are to-day earning a subsistence by labouring.

Soon after the development of Whitworth Colliery a pit was sunk at Page Bank, and a fresh contingent

of miners came to the district, many of whom settled in Spennymoor. Page Bank is outside the Urban area, nevertheless it is so closely connected with Spennymoor that this book would be incomplete without a passing reference to the terrible fire that occurred in the shaft on September 30th, 1858, through which a number of men lost their lives. The shaft was divided into an upcast and a down-cast by wood bratticing, and somehow or other the bratticing caught fire. The back overman, Thomas Kellett, was going down the shaft when he smelt the burning. Arrived at the bottom, he discussed the matter with the overman he was about to relieve, and they decided to return together to see what was amiss. Kellett rode on the top of the cage to examine the bratticing, when suddenly a mass of burning material came down upon his head and precipitated him to the bottom of the shaft. His companion gave the alarm, but before anything could be done for the men in the pit the entire shaft was on fire and the gear at the pit head was all in a blaze. Fire engines were brought from various places in the locality, and a channel was cut to the river to bring the water to the pit, but the efforts of the firemen were of little avail. The fire had taken too strong a hold, and had even caught the coal in the drift leading from the shaft to the staple. There were no less than 85 men and boys in the pit, and

the agony of the women at the pit head was terrible to witness; for nobody believed it possible that any could be rescued alive.

At last the fire burnt itself out in the shaft, but it still raged below, and the managers began to give up all hope of mastering it, when somebody suggested that a barrel of gunpowder might be let down into the shaft and fired with a fuse. The experiment was tried, and proved to be a success. The explosion extinguished the fire, and as soon as the smoke had cleared away an old miner named John Nicholson pushed his way through the crowd, climbed into the sling, and asked to be lowered into the mine. The people anxiously watched him disappear, and were giving up all hopes of his return, when the rope was shaken from below as a signal for him to be drawn up. As he came to the surface it was found that he was carrying a boy, and the boy was alive. The enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds. John Nicholson was hailed as a hero, and numbers of willing helpers volunteered to go down into the mine. The first thing to be done was to renew the bratticing. By the next morning the workers had succeeded in getting it half way down, and then to their great consolation they heard voices, and at once sent the welcome news to the top. Inspired by the prospect of success they redoubled their energies, and at last were able to venture into the workings.

K

Strange to say the roll of the dead only came to ten. Nine of these had been suffocated by the smoke, and poor John Kellett was the tenth. The survivors had escaped into places where neither smoke nor water could reach them. One of the men, John Waller, had the wisdom to close up a door and stop the crevices with straw, and some of them escaped to the air gate, while others took refuge in the broken. Nevertheless, they all suffered a terrible experience, menaced by death in four different shapes, fire, water, suffocation and hunger, and after they had been ten hours in the pit their lamps went out, and they were left in total darkness. Some of them occupied the time in prayer and lamentation, others ministered to those who sank exhausted under the terrible strain, one even laid down to sleep, and a merry young Irishman named Sharman actually tried to cheer up his comrades by singing rollicking comic songs. Seven of the victims of this terrible disaster resided at Spennymoor, and were buried at St. Paul's.

THE BIRTH OF SPENNYMOOR.



RIOR to the establishment of the Iron-works nobody would have supposed for one moment that in course of time the colliery houses at Whitworth would become the nucleus of a considerable town. So far as the growth of the district was concerned the indications were all in favour of Low Spennymoor. There was practically no High Street at all in those days. The highway was bordered on both sides by luxuriant hedges, and the only break in it was the National School, which dates from 1849. Above and below were fields, and on the opposite side of the road the only houses were the cluster of cottages called the Whitworth Rows that occupied the field between Dundas Street and the Railway. One of the earliest houses to be built adjoining the highway was a little public house on the site of the Station Hotel, and afterwards kept by Willie Willey and his wife Katie Willey. Then came the row of red tiled pit cottages between Church Street and James Street, upon the walls of which the Market and Town Hall were

afterwards built, and at the back of these were built the three pit rows still in existence. Then came the old house at the corner of Dundas Street, afterwards tenanted by the late Mr. Joseph Walker, who prided himself upon being the oldest tradesman in the town. When anyone ventured to argue with him he would say, "We agree to differ sir; I'm the oldest tradesman in the place, and we agree to differ." The shop adjoining and the "Shafto Arms" were built at about the same period. The "Shafto Arms" was at that time a little low public house first tenanted by Tommy Thew. It was continually being broken into, and suspicion fell upon the navvies who worked upon the railway, but none of them were ever caught. His son-in-law, Mr. Sampson Dixon, succeeded him in the business, and built a little brewery at the back of the public house, where he brewed excellent beer.

In course of time the "Wheatsheaf" was commenced, and became the post office for the district. Then came Johnnie's Row, built by Mr. Pattinson, the landlord of the "Pit Laddie," in Dundas Street, and the shop at the corner of Oxford Street, known for many years as Mackey's and afterwards as Turner's. Its first tenant was Mr. Thomas Byers, a cabinet maker and joiner, who afterwards became Surveyor to the Local Board, and built a good deal of Spennymoor, including St. Paul's Church, and drew

the plans for the Spennymoor Market, and the Town Hall. Later on the shop was remodelled for Tommy Dakers, a Bishop Auckland draper, and ultimately came into the possession of Mr. Mackey. The row of houses between the "Wheatsheaf" and the present Post office was built to the order of the Shaftos. They were intended as cottages for the better class of workmen of the district, but shops were urgently needed, and a number of tradesmen were allowed to commence business in them. Messrs. Corner, Richley, Robert Gibbon, Stephen Gibbon, Joseph Dodshon, and other old standards were the first to establish themselves in this row. The father of Mr. Thomas Farthing opened a flour shop at the corner of Villiers' Street, and gradually the buildings crept right down to the Bridge Inn. The growth of the other side of the street was much slower, there being no houses at all for many years beyond the rows of pit cottages and the National School. In course of time the rest of the ground was filled up, and tradesmen who had settled in Jerusalem found to their dismay that Spennymoor was going to become the land of promise, and the wisest of them at once emigrated to the High Street where they made comfortable fortunes.

By and by there came a flour mill in Church Street, close up to the Railway, kept by a man named Brignal Elliott, and where Mr. Buck's shop now

stands was the gossip house of the village, the shop of Mr. Prudhoe, the fishmonger, while close by was the penny pieman, a weak minded individual, who attended church with the utmost regularity, and once horrified Mr. Carr by drinking off the whole of the wine at communion, a misdemeanour for which he was for ever afterwards left to the last. Among the local characters who must certainly be mentioned were Washer Tommy, a male laundress who used to dress as a woman above the waist; Jemmy Paterson (or Matson as he was called) the bellman; Cud May the shoemaker, a strong man who once carried a donkey on his shoulders for a wager; Tommy the baker, who had a great brick oven in Thomas Street, and used to bribe the boys with pies to bring him firewood and live birds; and Carrick of the "Lord Raglan," the "Mayor of Spennymoor," whose premises were so confined that he had to use his back room as a cow byre. The village blacksmith was Mr. Thomas Archer, who subsequently became the landlord of the "Queen's Head," and made it a model of cleanliness and decency, and the village schoolmaster was an unmarried man, who lived in the present schoolmaster's house—at that time a single storied building—with an old housekeeper named Mrs. Redford, who made toffee and sold it to the school children. She was the owner of an offensive parrot, and one morning she awoke to find that

somebody had twisted its neck. Suspicion fell on the schoolmaster, who had often been annoyed by it, but he never confessed.

Then there was John Robinson (or Volti as he always was called), one of the kindest of men, whom all the children worshipped. His cart was always full of them, and one of the prettiest sights in Spennymoor was old Volti beating time with his whip whilst they sang comic songs. He was very stout and never spoke without first clearing his throat. Sometimes when he was in a particularly happy humour he would make the street ring with his whistling, and perhaps a child, encouraged by his good spirits, would say “Hey John, gie us a ha’penny.” “Ay hinny” was his invariable reply “wait till I’ve made yan.” By trade he was a blacksmith, but he happened to win some money on a horse named Voltigeur, and with this he built the “Voltigeur Inn” in George Street, and thus became known as Volti. He retailed a kind of small beer called swankie, principally for the use of the ironworkers whilst at work, and used to bring his water in a little barrel cart from a stand pipe close to where Mr. Starforth’s shop now stands. He was a Yorkshireman to the backbone, and on one occasion when a crow was flying over his head he said to a friend, “D’ye think that crow’s come straight fra’ Yorkshire?” “Certainly,” said his friend. “Damme,” said old Volti, raising his hat,

"I respect him." The Spennymoor Races were revived by him on the upper portion of the old race course, and he always took a keen interest in sporting matters. It is said that he and Dawson, the pawnbroker, once ran a race at midnight in nothing but their shirts from the Bridge Inn to the Black Horse at Tudhoe. The referee followed behind with their clothes, and Dawson won, but the two of them nearly frightened the landlady of the Black Horse out of her wits. She thought they were ghosts.

Then there was the village doctor, Dr. Hawks, who inaugurated the Volunteer movement in Spennymoor. It was just after the Crimean War, and he succeeded in raising from twenty to thirty men. They drilled in the High Street, and the people used to greatly enjoy the fun, especially before the uniforms arrived. The company drills were held at Auckland, and there being no railway at that time to Auckland, the men were compelled to walk. The only member of that little group now living is Mr Wm. Byers.

The Church Institute was built for Dr. Hawks, and the house adjoining was first tenanted by Miss Osborne, who kept a school there, but for some time these and the Railway Hotel opposite were the only houses above the Bridge. The newspapers and packets of stationery were brought from



THE HIGH STREET.

Durham by an old postman who had fought with the Scots Greys at Waterloo. The regiment was once going northward, when he suddenly appeared in their midst, mounted on his little white pony, and rode in their ranks to Durham.

The land at the back of Wear Street was occupied by an old cowkeeper named Joll (John) Vasey, and Peggy, his wife. He had sustained an injury to his back in his younger days, and was bent double, but he managed to get about pretty briskly, and even built a little cabin upon the land for himself and his wife to live in. The land was very poor, nevertheless he always had his rent ready at the rent audit, and the farmers used to wonder how he could possibly manage to raise it. At last one of them asked him the question point blank. "Why man," he replied, "if it wasn't for yon beck that runs past my back door I never *could* raise it." He watered his milk.

The railway bridge was then a little wooden structure, and the railway line was only a single line for mineral traffic. The West Hartlepool Harbour and Railway Company owned it, and for the convenience of the miners they ran a market train to Stockton at every pay, and the public were allowed to travel by the train upon payment of the moderate return fare of sixpence. One of the carriages was always an open one, and the train

was drawn by horse power from Ferryhill to Byers Green. On its arrival in Spennymoor the provisions were distributed at the Bridge, where men and boys congregated with barrows to convey their parcels home. The children, too, generally mustered in full force in order to relieve their parents of the parcel of "Stockton bullets," invariably included among their purchases, these being at that period the choicest delicacy known to the Spennymoor children. On the journey from Byers Green to Ferryhill the trucks travelled by themselves, there being an incline all the way. The horse would start the train, and was then unyoked by means of a slip-hook. He was so trained that he would step aside till the trucks had passed, and then jump into a dandy or truck with an open back to it at the end of the train, thus riding as a passenger to Ferryhill, so as to be ready to draw the train back again at night. The journey homeward sometimes took three hours, the return from Ferryhill being particularly slow, in fact it was no unusual circumstance for the horse to be stopped to allow some of the passengers to settle their differences with a fight.

The playground of the children was the ground between the Bridge Inn and the point where the overflow from the Park Lake falls into the Jordan. Formerly there were several fine trees along by the beck side, and these were used for swings, whilst the

banks came in usefully for the rolling of paste eggs. The Park beck, when dammed up, formed an agreeable bathing place for the boys, the water coming warm from the Whitworth Pit, and then there was skating in the winter, and sliding along the furrows. The town ash tip was on this ground, and has become memorable in connection with the great horse story of Spennymoor. It appears that an old carrier named Robert Dodds, who used to travel the Durham Road, once took a horse there to give its quietus. He buried it carefully, and then went home, but in the morning somebody discovered that the poor thing had scrambled out of its grave, and was lying on its back kicking amongst the ashes. The carrier was at once sent for, a more conclusive blow was given, and this time it was buried never to rise again. Somewhere in the centuries to come its remains will be resurrected, and taken to the nearest antiquarian as the relics of a prehistoric beast. Mr. Dodds was by no means kind to his horses. They were always half-starved, and there was a tradition among the boys of the locality that he fed them on sawdust. His 'bus carried passengers, and his wife is said to have ridden on the step to collect the fares, but there were times when her spouse, in his anxiety to be moving, would leave her standing in the road giving change to a passenger, with the result that she was compelled to walk home.

Tudhoe Grange was not in existence in the earlier days of Spennymoor. The town stopped at the Jordan, and although a few of the blocks on the western side of Weardale Street were erected in 1852, these were regarded as belonging more to Low Spennymoor, although they are now in the Parish of Tudhoe Grange.

The only buildings on the Tudhoe Grange side of the Jordan were the little toy-like farm still standing in the Durham Road, with its haystacks and the usual accessories, known as Low Tudhoe Grange, and the farm at Wood Vue, originally called High Tudhoe Grange, and subsequently known as Rundle's or French's. The farmer at Rundles, in the early days of Spennymoor, was an old fellow named French, who always wore an ancient box hat. He used to supply the town with milk. The milk, however, was not taken to the doors of the people, but had to be fetched, and a walk to Rundles for the milk was almost a walk into the country. There were luxuriant hedges on each side of the roadway to Durham, and facing the field in which Cheapside now stands was a fine row of beech trees. Mr French's wife, Barbara, was a queer body, with an insatiate appetite for funerals, or possibly for the creature comforts attending them. Sometimes whilst she was at a funeral the kitchen would be crowded

with lads waiting for milk. Her son played the fiddle, and the lads would while away the tedium of waiting by dancing to the strains of the only tune he knew. In spite, however, of her pet eccentricity, Barbara was one of the kindest hearted women in the district. Regularly every Sunday she used to put a pot of broth upon her fire for the comfort of any friends who chose to drop in before dinner, and she was always ready to bake bread for anyone in her big oven.

There was no bridge at all over the Iron-works' Beck at this period, and the bridge over the Jordan was only wide enough to allow two coaches to pass one another. It was first widened when the Wesleyan School was built. The Wesleyans had purchased a site, and in order to get the full benefit of their bargain they decided to cover in the South side of the beck, and build the wall of their playground right upon the centre of the arch. This was in the winter of 1860, and the river, being in flood, tore down arch and wall, and swept everything before it. The damage was soon repaired, and the bridge was subsequently widened on the other side by private subscription.

These were the days before the Franchise, so that in spite of the growing population there were only seven electors all told in Spennymoor, and six of those were Conservatives. The solitary Liberal

was Mr. Thomas Byers, and once when a couple of cabs came through from Bishop Auckland to take him to the poll he was so ashamed at being alone that he put his lad William, now the Postmaster of Spennymoor, into the other cab. "I took our Will," he explained, "to make the cab look decent."

The year of the great Reform agitation will long be remembered by the older residents of the town. The Country was at fever heat, and when the Government of Lord John Russell was thrown out, the fury of the unenfranchised masses knew no bounds. It was at this period that the railings of Hyde Park were torn down by the populace. In Spennymoor the excitement was as keen as in London, and if a man failed to show the Liberal colour he was set upon by gangs of roughs, and maltreated in the street under the very eyes of the police, who were quite powerless to prevent these scenes of disorder. Spennymoor has always taken a keen interest in the fortunes of the Liberal party, and in former times the people appear to have run riot during the elections. The last great demonstration of lawlessness in the place occurred during the general election of 1874, when the windows of many known supporters of the Tory party were smashed to atoms by the populace. The rioting commenced by somebody throwing a number of

empty baskets from the Railway Bridge. These were kicked about the streets, and the youths became so unusually excited that they lost all control of themselves. One of the publicans foolishly hung out a red flag, and in a moment his windows were shattered. The mob then rushed up the High Street, tipping vehicles on to their sides, and dealing destruction right and left. Finally they reached the Crown Hotel, where Mr. John Brown was sitting quietly with some of his friends. The first stone came into the bar, and knocked a jug clean out of a woman's hand, leaving her nothing but the handle. The next came into the room where Mr. Brown was sitting, and knocked his glass right off the table. The attack was so unexpected that he believed for a moment that one of his friends had done it; in fact, he seized him by the throat, and was commencing to ask somewhat forcibly for an explanation, when stone after stone came crashing through the windows. There was nothing for it but to close and barricade the house, as the other innkeepers had had to do, and so, on that one election day, it may be said that for the first and only time on record the public houses in Spennymoor were closed.

It was at the same election that the Conservative agent, the late George Maw, who will long be remembered in the County for his marvellous

advocacy in Police Court cases, played a clever election trick on the agent for the Liberal party. A number of cabs hired from Durham to convey the Liberal voters to the poll came into Spenny-moor, whereupon he plastered them over with Conservative bills, and used them for his own supporters. The cabmen knew nothing about who had engaged them, and the Liberals were chafing all day long because their cabs had not arrived.

For several years after the foundation of the Ironworks the infamous system of "Tommy tickets" prevailed in the locality. Workmen instead of being given a sub, were given an order on a local tradesman for groceries, and were compelled to pay a good deal more than the groceries were worth. The managers of the Ironworks were in no way connected with this arrangement, and when they found what their contractors were doing they tried their best to put a stop to it, and ultimately succeeded. The system continued up to a very much later date at Coulson's; in fact, it is said that the keeper of the "Tommy" shop was a relative of one of the partners.

THE GROWTH OF SPENNYMOOR.



IN the years following the foundation of the Tudhoe Ironworks the trowel of the jerry builder was heard extensively in the land. New pits had been sunk at Bishop's Close, Binchester, and East Howle, and there were no houses for the men to live in. To make things worse there came a strike at Whitworth Colliery, and several batches of workmen were decoyed into Spennymoor from all parts of the country to take the places of the men on strike. Many of them, as soon as they discovered what they were wanted for, took the first train home again, and those who remained found the greatest possible difficulty in getting a roof to cover them, for the strikers refused to go out of the houses; in fact, they had to be ejected by a force of police, assisted by candy men. This was the opportunity of the jerry builders. Houses sprouted like mushrooms. The Building Societies with unparalleled generosity began to empty their treasuries into Spennymoor, and men without the faintest shadow of capital were

L

trusted to an almost incredible extent. Directly the foundations were in they applied for an advance, and before the buildings were complete the money drawn upon them usually exceeded the cost. This is no exaggerated statement. The evidence of it can be found in the title deeds of the period, and many a man who purchases a house for the tens of pounds is astonished to find that at one time it has been mortgaged for hundreds.

The buildings, however, stopped at the Railway Bridge until the advent of Mr. Robert Prudhoe to the town. Mr. Prudhoe was a thriving chemist in Durham, and his friends Mr. Stratton and the Rev. John Tyson of Merrington gave him so glowing an account of the future of Spennymoor that he threw up his business at Durham and commenced as a chemist in the shop now occupied by Mr. Burdon. He was a man after Mr. Stratton's own heart. Mr. Stratton was the land agent for the Shafto estate, and a Scotchman to boot, and it was very much to his interest to get the land in Spennymoor sold at a high price for building purposes. Mr. Robert Prudhoe was a man of energy, and not in the least afraid of taking a risk, provided he could see a good profit at the end of it. Mr. Stratton pointed out to him over and over again that the first man to commence building above the bridge would certainly make his fortune, and at length Mr. Prudhoe decided upon the

plunge. To his infinite credit be it said, that in spite of his primary object to make money, he was no jerry builder. The houses put up by Robert Prudhoe are as sound to-day as when they were first tenanted, and the block above the Crown Hotel is as nice a piece of good building as anyone could wish to see. He built block after block, and the ice being broken, his example was extensively followed.

Mr. Stratton, having succeeded in getting the town set away, commenced to develop it on lines peculiarly his own. For a Scotchman he was most unmethodical. He kept no record whatever of his proceedings as agent for the estate, he made frequent mistakes in his measurements, and he thought nothing of rescinding a contract. He would sign an agreement one day and go and ask for it back on the day following. "Ye can no' act on that agreement" he would say "Mr. Shafto winna agree to it." It is said that he was one of the shrewdest of men at a bargain. Once when he was commissioned to sell some timber for the estate, he sat in the Talbot Hotel, Bishop Auckland, for more than two hours discussing the matter with the intending purchasers. He talked upon every topic but the topic they were met to discuss, and whenever the word "timber" came into the conversation he would say "Weel, gentlemen, what say ye to another glass of whisky." The whisky came in over and over again without

the negotiations advancing a single step. Finally he put on his hat and said "Weel, gentlemen, if ye care to see me aboot that timber ye were mentioning I'll be at the office in the morning." Then he departed, chuckling at his own sagacity. "Ye see what thae men wanted" he said to a friend who had accompanied him, "but a mon should never put his hand to paper when there's whisky aboot."

In laying out Spennymoor for building purposes he achieved a master stroke of policy. The portion of the Shafto estate on the south side of the highway is nothing but the enclosed moorland. The ancient fence of the Prior is at the back of it and the land of the Priory is now the property of Sir William Eden. Mr. Stratton, in order to get the best price possible for the Shafto land, decided to put Sir William Eden out of the market by making his land inaccessible from the highway, and therefore useless for building sites, so he reserved a strip of land a yard wide from the top of Spennymoor to the bottom, and refused to sell it to anyone. The consequence is that Sir William Eden cannot make a roadway across this strip without the leave of the Shaftos, and the Shaftos will never grant him leave so long as an inch of their ground remains available for building purposes. This explains the laying out of the streets at the back of Craddock Street. As the ground rises, the Shafto enclosure becomes narrower

and narrower, until at the top of Spennymoor there is only room now for a single row of houses. Mr. Stratton was once terribly alarmed to find that by an oversight he had included a piece of his precious three foot strip in the sale of two building sites. Had the purchaser only known he might have made his fortune by selling the sites over again to Sir William Eden, but directly Mr. Stratton found out the error he set to work to rectify it, and it may be taken for granted that the error will never occur again.

As soon as the town began to grow above the bridge, Mr. Stratton decided that it was time to have a Local Board, consequently in 1864 he set to work to form one, and Mr. Reay was elected chairman. The district of the Local Board was mapped out to include only the town of Spennymoor. Tudhoe Grange was not then in existence, and Mr. Stratton was careful to keep Whitworth outside the boundary, so that although it had the full benefit of the work of the Local Board, it nevertheless escaped its share of the rates.

The Local Elections were hotly contested. The voting was not by ballot but by papers filled up by the electors at their houses, a pernicious system that opened the door to an extensive amount of corruption. At the first election the voting papers were distributed by the Police Sergeant. He is

said to have carried the papers in a basket into the middle of the street, and then handed them out to the electors or to their children. The people were awe-stricken at this unusual proceeding, but the electors soon became accustomed to their newly acquired privilege, and it is greatly to be feared that the candidates of that period were not particularly scrupulous about the manner in which their seats were gained.

After the first election it became the custom for the papers to be delivered from door to door, and it is said that it was nothing uncommon for the men who carried them to be shadowed by the candidates, who took every opportunity of seeing that the papers were filled up to their own satisfaction. The fact that an elector was dead or in an asylum was no obstacle whatever to his vote being polled. So long as his name continued on the register his voting paper was delivered and duly filled up, so that the votes of dead men became a recognised weapon of warfare. One of the veterans of that period tells with gusto that the women used often to put the voting papers behind a picture till their husbands came home, and that he himself sometimes slipped into the house by the front to get the paper, whilst the lady of the establishment was gossiping at the back. On one occasion he had been suspected by another candi-

date of having one of these papers in his possession, but the two walked together down the street without making any reference to it. However, it was late at night, and the man who had the paper knew that his opponent, being the more powerful of the two, would take the first opportunity to get it from him by force, so he stopped for a moment, pretending that his bootlace wanted fastening, and managed to slip the paper into his boot. As they came under the Bridge his opponent demanded the paper, and failing to get it, he turned him upside down, and searched every part of him but his boots. These he overlooked, and the vote was polled after all.

A story is told of a candidate who once locked the door of a house where a voting paper had been left because he happened to descry his rival in the neighbourhood. He then went away in a high state of elation, but his opponent finding the door fastened, actually got in at the window, and thus secured the paper. A common trick with the candidates was to persuade the electors who were opposed to them to mark too many votes upon their papers, thus spoiling them altogether. The papers were usually collected by the police and kept in the police station until the counting on the following day. It is said that on one occasion a religious but somewhat adventurous candidate was so convinced of the Divine

will that he should be returned to the Local Board, that he bribed a policeman with a new suit of clothes to let him into the station during the night, where he played havoc with the papers, altering them to suit his own purposes.

Up to the time of the formation of the Local Board the town had had no proper water supply. It had been content with the various wells and springs in the locality, and water carrying was almost a recognised trade. One of the principal sources of supply was a spring opposite the Black Horse Inn at Tudhoe, the water being retailed at a halfpenny a bucket by Willie Scaife, better known as "Water Willie." It was quite a common arrangement to exchange a bucket or "skeelfull" of coals for a "skeelfull" of water. It was impossible for so primitive an arrangement to continue now that the town had commenced to grow and so it was decided to contract with Mr. Reay for a permanent supply from a spring in the old Merrington shaft. The water was yellowish and the people were very dubious about using it, but the analysis tended to quiet the grumblers, and sanction was obtained from the Local Government Board for a loan of £550 for pipes to carry it to a reservoir belonging to Mr. Shafto at the top of Stratton Street. In the meantime, however, it was discovered that a spring of beautifully clear water, in the

valley between Merrington and Spennymoor, would be sufficiently copious to supply the whole town, and arrangements were made with Sir William Eden for this to be carried to the reservoir instead. A loan of £1,500 was obtained for the needful works, and for eight years the Board did a good stroke of business for Spennymoor, by supplying the water to the new houses belonging to the Weardale Company, in the Tudhoe Grange district. But one day it began to be noticed that the supply was failing, and at last, to the consternation of everybody, it came to an end altogether, and there was quite a famine in the land. The sinking of Binchester Pit had dried up the runner. All the springs and wells of the district had then to be drawn upon to meet the demand, water being brought even from Ferryhill, and the old water-carriers brought out their barrels, and began to travel their rounds as before. The spring most extensively patronised was that at Ox Close. This was besieged all day long, and many were the fights at it for turns. It was no uncommon thing for women to wait there in file from early morn to mid-day. At last things came to such a pass that water had to be pumped into the Board's Reservoir from the Beck that runs into the Reservoir, at the back of the Railway, the property of the Weardale and Gas Companies. But the taps brought

forth frogs, and the pipes had to be cut to get them out, so that the Local Board were compelled to look for a supply elsewhere. Some of the members favoured the idea of bringing Waskerley water into the district, but others of a more economical turn persuaded the Board to make another trial of the yellow tinted variety from the old Merrington Pit. Pipes were laid to the Stratton Street Reservoir, and ultimately the supply was laid on to the houses, but the people called it by opprobrious names, and refused to touch it, preferring to pay the water-carriers to bring them water from wells known to be sweet.

In any case the supply would have been quite inadequate for the town, and so there was nothing for it but to give way with a good grace, and ask the Weardale and Shildon Water Company to bring the Waskerley water into the town. As a matter of fact the Spennymoor supply comes not from the Waskerley Reservoir, but from the Tunstall Reservoir situate near to Wolsingham. It is seven-eighths of a mile long and eighty feet deep, and it gathers water from 3,000 acres of moorland.


The Waskerley water has been a great blessing to Spennymoor. It has been computed by the Vicar of Tudhoe that the death rate of Low Spennymoor for the ten years subsequent to its introduction went down 30 per cent., as compared



TUDHOE GRANGE MARKET PLACE.

with the previous ten years. The water for the bulk of the town passes through the Stratton Street Reservoir, but the houses above St. Paul's Church are supplied direct from the main. Whenever the water from the main is temporarily cut off the residents of these houses can still get water by carrying it from the houses connected with the Reservoir.

TUDHOE GRANGE.

IRECTLY the Local Board was formed the building fever seized upon Tudhoe Grange. The Shafto estate ceases at the Jordan, and the land on the other side of it is the property of Mr. Bryan Salvin, of Burn Hall. Mr. Salvin's agent, Mr. Fleming, senr., looked with jealous eyes upon the activity of Mr. Stratton, and he and Mr. David Syme, the builder for the Salvin estate, put their heads together and proceeded to cut up Tudhoe Grange into building sites. The first house to be erected was the Commercial Hotel. It was a speculation of a Mr. Meynell and was called the "Penny Gill" because it was the first house in Spennymoor to bring down the price to a penny. Mr. Meynell planted his building right in front of what was then the entrance to the Ironworks road, in the hope of catching the men as they were coming from work, but Mr. Dyson, who was then the general manager for the Weardale Company, promptly diverted the road so that it might enter the town as at present. Mr. Dyson was

a philanthropist of the practical order. Another public house had been planted by the Level Crossing to catch the men at the gate in Merrington Lane, whereupon Mr. Dyson purchased the house and did away with the license.

Cheapside having been set away by the building of the "Penny Gill" the rest of the shops in the front street soon sprang into existence. Houses were built by Messrs. Harrison, Liddell, and Hood, and the block at the corner was one of the speculations of Mr. David Syme. The Weardale Hotel was then called the "King's Head," and one of the first of its tenants was Mr. William Green, now the landlord of the "Cambridge Hotel," and at that time a champion runner. He drew a large number of the sporting fraternity to the house, and there were frequent foot races on the old black road from Cheapside to French's, in fact, Mr. Green practically created the sporting business that was afterwards transferred to the Tudhoe Park Hotel by Mr. Cuthbert Gardiner.

The brewery in Tudhoe Grange dates from this period. It was built by Mr. Ogleby, and its water was taken from a spring in the dene behind Wood Vue, but after the town began to grow the water was so much polluted that the wells were condemned by the local authority and had to be enclosed with large barrel tops. The brewery was not a success in

the earlier days of its history. It was closed quite a number of years, and at last Mr. P. B. Junor, a Durham brewer, purchased the property and came to reside in the town. Since then its vats have never been empty.

The back streets of Tudhoe Grange were all built in the five years between 1865 and 1870, and then the land in the Barn field was laid out in its present form in accordance with a fad of the squire of Burn Hall, and the Blocks were built upon it, the leases prohibiting building in any other form. The leaseholds of Tudhoe Grange were a temptation to speculative builders who were unable to find the money for the purchase of the land outright, but the block system was too much, even for the speculative builders, and at last, in disgust at the ground rents and outrageous building conditions on the Salvin estate, they turned their attention to Mr. Stratton's new sites at the high end of Spennymoor, and from that time the streets of Spennymoor have been slowly creeping up-hill whilst the streets of Tudhoe Grange have remained at an ignominious standstill. The present extensions at the Ironworks will assuredly create a demand for buildings close at hand, and if ever the land on the Salvin Estate becomes available as freehold the fields of Tudhoe Grange will grow houses instead of grass.

The rivalry between the two land agents infected

their respective supporters to such an extent that the unoffending people of the district were dragged unwillingly into the quarrel. The story of the covered markets is an interesting commentary upon the class of men who ruled the fortunes of Spennysmoor at this period. The Spennysmoor people already had an open market in Oxford Street, adjoining the Police Station, but Mr. Stratton determined that Spennysmoor should have a covered market as well. The project, however, hung fire for about a year, and the brilliant idea occurred to the fertile mind of Mr David Syme that he could steal a march on Spennysmoor by erecting a covered market in Tudhoe Grange. Accordingly he formed a syndicate, and commenced negotiations for a site. Mr. Stratton, determined not to be outdone, at once persuaded the Local Board into the very bad bargain of leasing some of the old pit cottages on the South side of the High Street at an exorbitant rent for a term of 42 years. A fine covered market was the result. It was erected upon the outside walls of the cottages, and a row of shambles were built at the back. A number of useful shops were also built along the frontage, and the market is entered by an arch, surmounted by a clock tower that still waits for the clock. The lease will expire before many years are over, and all this fine property, upon which so

much public money has been expended, will ultimately fall into the hands of the Shaftos for their own private benefit. Whatever Mr Stratton was to Spennymoor he was a good servant to his masters.

The Spennymoor market was a great success at its opening, for it was built in the year 1870 when the "good times" were commencing, but Mr. Stratton made the fatal mistake of trying to force all the Street salesmen into it, in fact, a decree went forth from the Local Board that even the hawkers of fruit and vegetables were to be prohibited from going their customary rounds. For a time the hawkers were terrified, but only for a time. The Board were powerless to enforce their order, and as as to the Street salesmen, the jurisdiction of the Board ceased at the Jordan. A few months later the Tudhoe Grange market was completed, and ever since then the tradesmen of Spennymoor have had to compete with the tradesmen of Tudhoe Grange.

It may readily be conceived that the Local Board had many lively discussions upon local affairs, and at times they displayed an obstinacy in the matter of economy that told to an inconvenient extent upon their constituents. On one occasion they entered into the lists with the Gas Company, complaining that the price of the gas was too high. The Company refused to give way, and so the Board went to the expense of

lamps for oil. But when the glasses were thoroughly smoked the Board's new lights looked more like red-hot poker than lights, and their constituents made such an outcry about it that after a year of the oil the battle was won by the Gas Company, and the new lamp-posts afterwards did duty as posts for the fence of the old settling tanks at Ox Close. The Gas Company was another of the many enterprises in which Mr. Prudhoe interested himself. The original company had been founded in 1855, and when Mr. Prudhoe came to the town the works were leased by Mr. T. M. Reay. Mr. Reay, however, had other business to attend to, and there were times when the town was in darkness. The gas-holders fell into decay, and everything about the place was in a most unsatisfactory condition. As soon as the lease expired Mr. Prudhoe undertook the Secretaryship of the Company, and proceeded with a good deal of ability to set it upon its feet upon fresh lines altogether. He persuaded capitalists from outside to take up some of the new shares, and then he encouraged the Directors to appeal to Parliament for powers to extend the Company's area. The Weardale Company, who had just then established Gasworks of their own, opposed the scheme, and opposition also came from Coxhoe where there was another small concern. Nevertheless the directors carried their way triumphantly

M

and before Mr. Prudhoe retired from the Secretaryship he had the satisfaction of laying down mains to the length of fifteen miles.

One of the most genial of the members who sat on the Local Board was Volti Robinson. If the day was hot he would take off his coat and sit in his shirt sleeves. It is said that he once fell off to sleep whilst the chairman was reading an important letter. The chairman wishing to awaken him banged a ruler upon the table. "You heard that Mr. Robinson?" he said. "Yesh, yesh," said old Volti, and off he went to sleep again.

Although Mr. Stratton exercised great influence over the Board, he took no part in its deliberations during the first two years of its existence. Nevertheless, he was continually itching to have his fingers in the pie, and at last he and his faithful henchman, Mr. Prudhoe, offered themselves for election, and were duly returned. Mr. Reay continued for five years to be the nominal chairman of the Board, but after the advent of Mr. Stratton he rarely attended its meetings. Mr. Stratton accordingly succeeded to the chair as a matter of course, and so accustomed did the Board become to his dominion that he had a good deal of his own way with them. He was very genial in his conduct of the proceedings, in fact, it was his custom at the conclusion of the business to say "Weel, gentlemen, we'll aal gan down to Tommy's

and have a wee drap o' whiskey," whereupon the meeting would adjourn to Mr. Archer's public house, and the proceedings would be prolonged until closing time, the chairman proposing the stirrup glass several times in succession.

But after a time there came the inevitable revolt. It was plotted in secret, and when the time came for re-electing their chairman, one of the members got upon his feet with an innocent look, and suggested that the Rev. John Gaskill be appointed. Mr. Stratton seconded the proposal as a matter of form, never dreaming that it would be carried, and waited expectantly for someone to propose his own re-election. At last it dawned upon him that the whole thing had been previously planned, so he took the vote and then rose from his seat with much dignity, put on his coat, gave a withering glance at his colleagues, and said "Good neet, gentlemen, I'll no' play second fiddle here," nor did he attend any of the meetings again.

Notwithstanding his eccentricities George Stratton was a man who left behind him a clean record. He was an honest servant to the Shaftos, and although it may be alleged against him that his partiality for their interests sometimes conflicted with his public duties, it must be said in his defence that he never allowed his own personal interests to affect his public life. If he was shrewd, he was also

M2

straightforward, if he was careful, he could also be generous. He died in 1882. His burial was attended by a large concourse of people, and there were many in Spennymoor who genuinely mourned his loss.

The Local Board has now been superseded; nevertheless it did good work in its day. The most useful of its undertakings was the making, paving, and lighting of the Spennymoor streets. These were for many years little better than a quagmire in winter time, and the houses were damp and insanitary, and in many cases absolutely unfit for habitation. The Local Board went to work in a drastic manner to remedy this disgraceful condition of things, and the streets of Spennymoor are now a shining example to the authorities of wealthier localities. Unfortunately, a portion of the work was badly scamped, and will have some day to be done over again, but upon the whole Spennymoor has reason to be proud of her streets, and owes a debt of gratitude to the men who carried out this great reform.

There is only one great crime to be laid at the door of the Local Board, and that is the Railway Bridge. As soon as the town began to grow the line had to be doubled, and ultimately the old wooden bridge was removed to make way for the present structure. The Railway Company

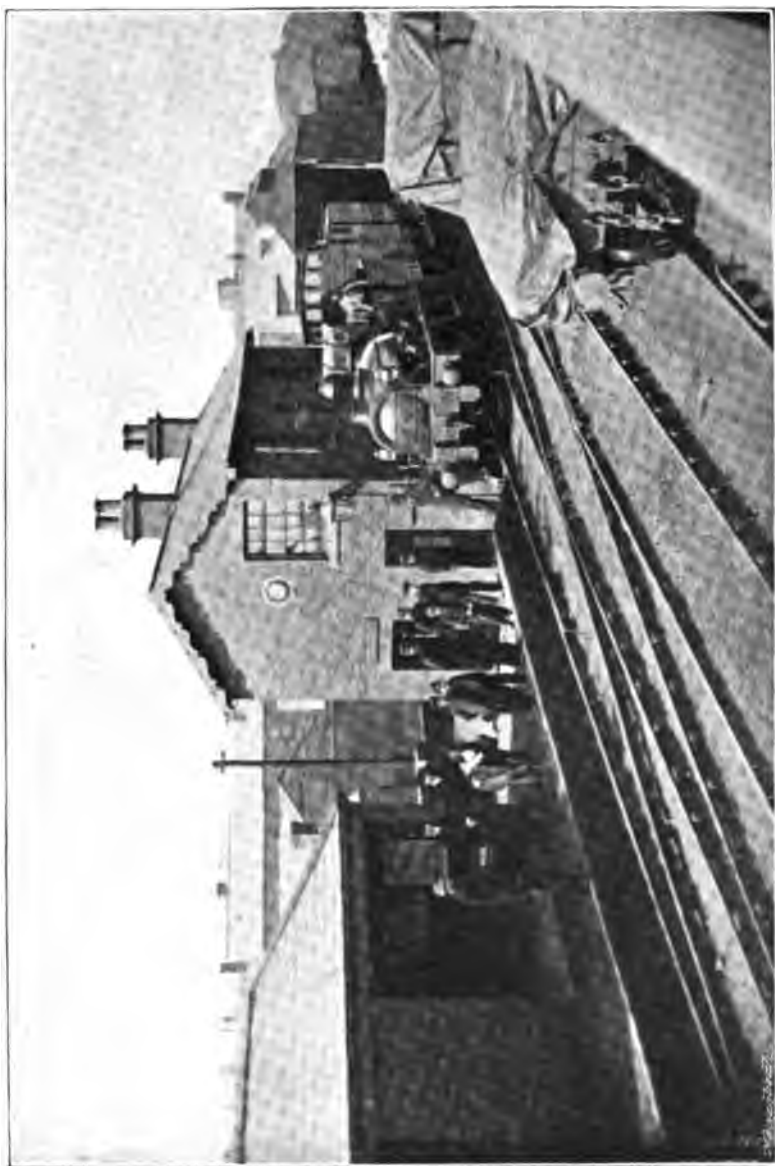
decided to carry the northern support of the Bridge half-way into the street, and the Local Board, with the combined genius that so often characterises local authorities, examined the plan upside down, and only discovered what was going to happen when the foundations of the Bridge were laid. They at once threatened to prosecute the Company for not building according to the plan, but the Company politely asked them to look at the plan again before taking any proceedings. There was nothing for it but to appeal to the generosity of the directors. The Company, however, had already been put to a great deal of expense and they demanded a very moderate compensation, whereupon the Board, with its penny-wise policy, refused to accept their terms, and the work was allowed to proceed.

The High Street of Spennymoor would have been a really fine thoroughfare had the span of the Bridge been carried back to the frontage of the Station Hotel. As it is, the town appears mean and ugly to anyone entering it for the first time, and all because of the hideous obstruction that forms the gateway to the business portion of the town. It is to be hoped that before long something may be done to make it a thing of beauty. The widening of the span would be a costly undertaking, but it might be possible at a moderate expense to redeem its ugliness by building a gateway of mediæval type on both sides

of it. Even a gateway in stucco would be preferable to the present arrangement.

The first Railway Station was erected about forty years ago close to the present Goods Station. It consisted of a single room, and the way up to it was by the side of the Station Hotel. It is said that the first stationmaster generally sat puffing at his pipe in the corner of the room that did duty as a booking office, yet, if anyone came in with a pipe in his mouth, he at once snapped out, "No smoking allowed." The present station was built in 1876, and two years later the passenger traffic was carried as far as Toddhills. It was not until 1885 that the railway to Auckland was made, so that up to that time the only way to Bishop Auckland was by road.

The railway service between Spennymoor and Ferryhill was wretchedly inadequate and would probably have been worse had it not been for the perseverance of Mr. James Watson, who preceded Mr. Hill in the office of station master. Mr. Watson pegged away at the Company until he gained a succession of reforms. He secured the abolition of the market train, thereby preventing a good deal of money from going out of the town, he improved the train service, he obtained a proper cattle dock for the butchers, and saved them from having to drive their beasts all the way from Durham, and he



THE OLD RAILWAY STATION.

induced the company to deal liberally with Spennymoor in the matter of excursions. When first he proposed an excursion to Scarborough the officials laughed at him, nevertheless, he carried his point, and had the ultimate satisfaction of sending off no less than 700 people by it. The Whitworth band accompanied the excursionists, and the good people of Scarborough were quite startled at this rowdy descent upon their town. Some of them asked one woman where the people had all come from and she replied Spennymoor, "Where's that?" they asked. "Wey, its beside Hett and Dor'm" was the reply, and on she went. Mr. Watson is now the traffic manager of the Weardale Company, and is familiarly known to the people of the district as "Long Watson," in compliment to his great height. For many years past he has acted as the local reporter for the "Auckland Times and Herald," and it is not too much to say that his entertaining column is the only redeeming feature of that respectable but exceedingly dull newspaper. His gossip is not always reliable, but it is particularly readable, and when there is a scarcity of news, and Jupiter Pluvius and the Temple of Thespis are pressed into the service, the people of Spennymoor are just as content as when there are accidents and other startling items to fill out the column. It is to be hoped that Mr. Watson may be given a freer hand now that

the paper has passed into a different proprietorship. He is a master of fiction, and every newspaper editor who knows his business knows that fiction is the thing that makes a weekly paper sell.

PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT.



NO recognised place of entertainment was built in the town until 1870. Prior to that date, any meetings that had to be held were held in the Schools or else in the public houses.

A little Mechanics' Institute was started above where Mr. Starforth's shop now stands, and later on it was removed into a pit cottage on the site of the present Town Hall. There were also several ball-rooms attached to the public houses, notably the one at the back of the Station Hotel, which at that time included the shop now owned by Mrs. Cram. This was a very popular dancing room in its time, and some of the best people in Spennymoor have commenced their flirtations within its walls.

A booth theatre was run by a man named Collet for a long time on the site of Johnnie's Row, and his orchestra is said to have consisted of a clarionet and a big drum. The company was of the good old stock kind, and their salaries varied with the business done in the establishment.

A story is told of one of the members of the company, that in the times when lump sugar was dear he marked all his pieces in the shape of dominoes, in order to keep a check on his landlady. One night he greatly upset her by saying "Now Missus, you've been at it again, double-six is a missin'."

The roof of Collet's booth was of canvas, and one winter it became so dilapidated, that the snow came through on to the benches below. It is said that on one occasion a lad in the audience picked up a handful of snow, and sent it right at the head of the villain of the piece just as he came to the most exciting moment of the play. The actor stopped short and said, "I'll give half-a-crown to know who threw that." The audience looked upon this little incident as the most enjoyable portion of the evening's entertainment.

Later on a booth was set up in Charles Street, and Hunter's Booth, another favourite place of entertainment, once stood on the site of the Theatre, at that time a piece of waste land given up to shows and roundabouts.

Some of the shows brought with them novelties that greatly impressed the simple pit people, although in these days of Board School education, they would scarcely go down, even with the youngest children. The first "wild man" who came to

the district created quite a sensation. He was brought on to the platform in chains and made a great hullabaloo, brandishing an axe and displaying other characteristics of extreme savagery. A "pluck" was thrown to him, and he went at it like a wild beast, tearing it with his teeth, chopping at it with an axe, and eating portions of it raw, to the intense horror of the spectators. One small boy of that period was drawn to the spot night after night by a terrible fascination, and remembers to this day the thrill of ecstasy he experienced when permitted to shake the grimy paw of the monster whilst he was being drawn in chains among the crowd. But, alas! one day he was wandering round the back of the booth, and happened to peep in at the caravan. The wild man was sitting with the rest of the show people, and without any chains, eating a cooked meal and speaking remarkably good English. The spell was broken.

Before the Town Hall was built the only room in the town available for concerts was the Wesleyan Schoolroom, and for many years the concerts of the old Harmonic Society were given within its walls. Mr. Scholz was the conductor, Mrs. Cowx presided at the piano, and Councillor Colley (afterwards Chairman of the Local Board) displayed his proficiency with the flute in the orchestra. The concerts of the Harmonic Society were red letter days in the life of

the town, and the determination of everybody to go to them taxed the space of the little schoolroom to the utmost, until the need for a more commodious place of entertainment became so pronounced that a number of tradesmen formed themselves into a Limited Liability Company to remedy the deficiency. Four of the pit cottages adjoining the new market buildings were leased and transformed into the present Town Hall at the cost of £1,000. It is still the principal hall of the locality, and a few years ago it was greatly improved by the addition of retiring and dressing rooms, but it is now scarcely adequate to answer the requirements of the town. It has, nevertheless, done good service in its day, and some of the greatest singers in the world have appeared upon its platform. For several years in succession the concerts of the Spennymoor Musical Society were given there, and a very high degree of excellence was attained by the choir under the leadership of Mr. F. S. Burnip. Unfortunately for Spennymoor, Mr. Burnip removed from the town in 1894, and since then nobody in the district has been found worthy to take up his bâton.

The Town Hall being only leasehold, there is no encouragement to the shareholders to rebuild it, and if the lease is not very soon renewed it is almost a certainty that a more convenient hall will be erected upon another site. It is incredible that a place that

has grown to be the market town for a population of 40,000 should be so inadequately supplied with places of public entertainment.

At the same time that the Town Hall was being built the present Theatre was commenced in Cambridge Street. It was an enterprise of Mr. George Watson, a brickmaker at Hunwick, and its first manager was Joe Wilson, the famous Tyne-side comedian, who had previously built the Tyne Theatre with bricks from Hunwick, and had thus made Mr. Watson's acquaintance. Unfortunately, the capital at Mr. Watson's command was insufficient for a building commensurate with the needs of the place, consequently the Theatre is tawdry and inconvenient, and situate in the worst position possible amongst the pit cottages at the back of the Market. Its career has been a very chequered one, and its managers have been numerous, but none of them have as yet succeeded in making a fortune out of the place. Still, it is the only Theatre in the town, and each new manager at the commencement of his tenancy engages a number of really good companies, so that the people of Spennymoor have little to complain of in the quality of the dramatic fare provided for them.

At one period of its existence it was under the management of a gentleman who kept a stock company. The manager, the exact counterpart of

Mr. Vincent Crummles, always took the leading part himself, and became quite a popular favourite, although at times he was "guyed" unmercifully by the pit. His scenery was of a primitive description, and no matter what might be the play he was always to the fore, and could be heard cursing audibly whenever he felt that the members of his company were not putting enough life into their parts.

One night in a very cold season he delivered a speech to his patrons thanking them for their support. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "you have sat here in the cold, night after night, within these damp and cheerless walls, but you shall no longer have to suffer this inconvenience, for I have specially arranged for a new heating apparatus, and it will be fixed to-morrow night. Come in crowds with your wives and children, and you will be comfortable and happy." On the following evening the people crowded into the place to see the new apparatus, and they found to their great disgust nothing but a coke lamp fire burning in the middle of the pit.

Once he announced a new play for the following Monday, entitled "The Dangers of the Mine." The curtain went up, revealing a smoky darkness. The orchestra, or what there was of it, commenced a doleful melody, and a basket descended from a hole in the roof bearing the well-known form of the

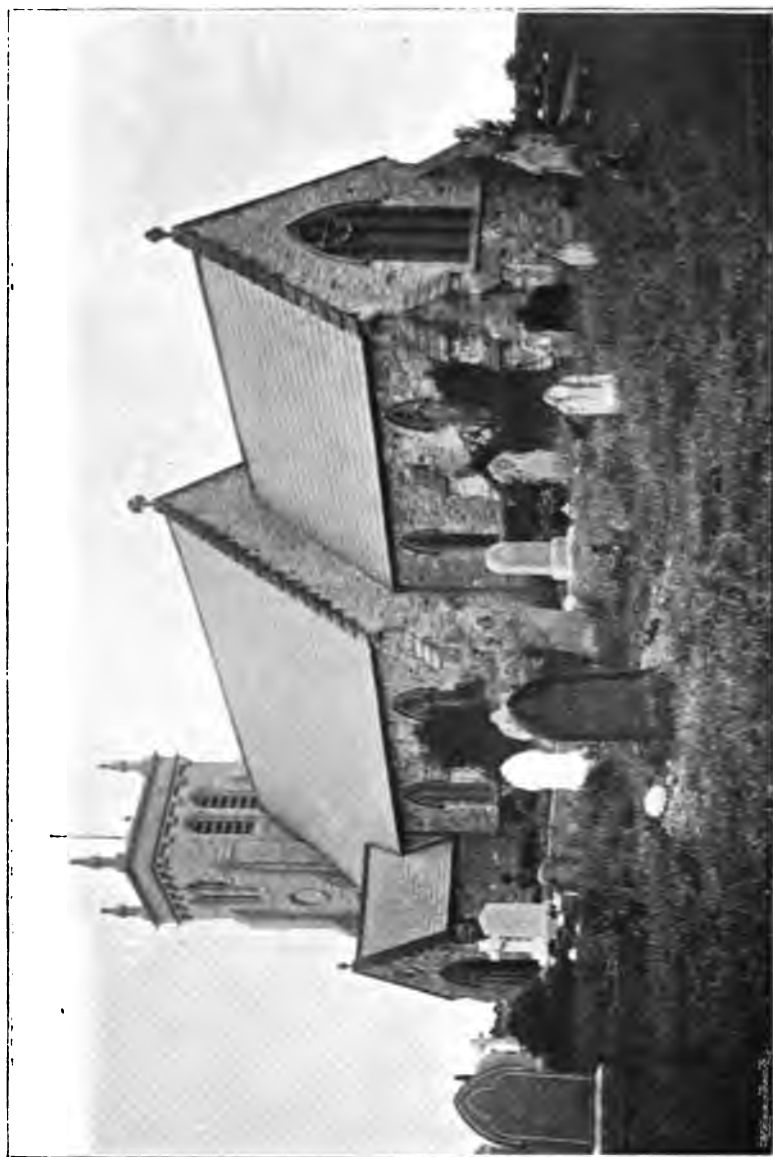
manager, gazing upward with an expression of melancholy resignation, and clinging like grim death to the rope. Arrived at the ground he got out of the basket with his pick and shovel, and came to the front, his pick in one hand and his shovel in the other. The applause was deafening, the pitmen in the gallery nearly brought down the house in their enthusiasm. Then in sepulchral tones he remarked, "Thus have I from day to day to grovel in the bowels of the earth, so that I may gain a few pence to keep life in my wife and little ones." Again a round of applause, whereupon he dragged himself wearily to the side wings, and commenced picking at the boards. The people were delighted, the pitmen encouraged him with practical hints and suggestions, and the audience were in the best of good humour, when suddenly there came a rumbling noise, and the distinguished actor bowled across the stage like a teetotum. An explosion had occurred, and the curtain came down to slow music, whilst the hero was struggling with the after-damp.

The only other hall in the heart of Spennymoor is the Central Hall, a depressing building erected by Mr. Winstone upon the walls of some old pit cottages in Dundas Street. Mr. Winstone will long be remembered in Spennymoor as the originator of the "Old Folks Christmas Dinner," the only local charity with which Spennymoor has hitherto identified itself. Adjoining the Central Hall there is a

box of a place called the Victoria Hall, also built by Mr. Winstone. The Central Hall and the Victoria Hall are now mainly used by Quadrille parties and Friendly Societies, and the proprietor being very moderate in his charges, they serve for auctions, for meetings of ratepayers, and for the exhibitions of phrenologists and hypnotists, but they are of little service for the public amusement.

The Freemason's Hall on the other side of the Street was built in the same fashion in 1887. It was first used as a Temperance Hall and the Freemasons met in a room at the old North Eastern Hotel. Since they acquired their present building they have converted the interior of it into a beautiful and impressive home for the mysteries of their craft.

The Parochial Hall at Low Spennymoor was built by the Temperance party, the prime mover in the business being Mr. Bartholomew Dawson. He threw himself heart and soul into the work, and would have had the debt paid off within a very few years had he been spared to complete the undertaking. But when he dropped out of the ranks the enthusiasm of his followers sank to zero, and the hall was ultimately sold at a very low price to the Churchwardens of Tudhoe, who have since added it to their National School. The Temperance people have lately erected a little iron building in Tudhoe Lane, and this is now the only home of their party in the district.



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

CHURCHES AND CHAPELS.



St. Paul's Church was built in the year 1857 as a chapel of ease to Whitworth. The building is a substantial structure of stone in the Early-English style, consisting of a nave, chancel, side aisle, porch, and a square tower with a peal of eight tubular bells. The side aisle was added in 1870, and the window at the eastern end of it, inscribed as a memorial of the work in the parish of the first vicar of St. Paul's, the Rev. Charles Carr, is one of the choicest pieces of stained glass work to be found in the county. The figure of St. Paul is exceedingly graceful and natural, and the face is full of character. The other pictures are of equal merit, the colours being rich and cleverly harmonized and the figures supple and full of life, in fact the entire window is in great contrast to some of the other stained glass work in the Church. It cost more than £100, and the expense of it was mainly defrayed by Mr. T. M. Reay.

The tower and bells were added to the Church

in 1890 to the memory of the late Robert Duncombe Shafto at a total cost of £900, and it is now in contemplation to enlarge the chancel and add to it an organ chamber. Through the liberality of Mrs. Shafto the choir of the church have recently been supplied with surplices and cassocks, and this has necessitated their migration from the side aisle, where the organ now stands, into the chancel, which is much too narrow for them. The surpliced choir is a great improvement, and the services are bright and attractive and largely attended. The living is valued at £320 a year and £120 for the curate. The patrons are the Dean and Chapter of Durham, and the present incumbent is the Rev. John Gaskill.

The Vicarage used to adjoin the present Church Institute, but in 1876 a fine building was erected at the high end of Spennymoor in an enclosure of an acre and a quarter, at a cost of £2,100 for the Vicarage, and £600 for the ground. Mr. Gaskill was for many years the Editor of the "Durham Advertiser," and he first came to the locality as Curate of Whitworth under the Rev. Charles Carr. The services were then held in the National School, and the Curate's house adjoined the present Church Institute.

It is said that Mr. Carr once had reason to complain to the sexton that the Communion wine at St. Paul's displayed a tendency to evaporate.

The sexton was unable to explain the phenomenon, but suspicion fell upon the pew-opener. It was, of course, impossible to detect her without a good deal of trouble, and so Mr. Carr decided to adulterate the wine with a rousing aperient. The lady never confessed, but she was very bad after it, and never went to the bottle again.

Mrs. Carr used to ride up from Whitworth on a little donkey, but if she had to go into the town she left the donkey in the churchyard until her return.

Mr. Gaskill relates a funny story of his residence in Whitworth Terrace. An old man known to the children as "Shavey-stick" Richardson, the "caller" for Whitworth, once knocked at his door at about one o'clock in the morning. Mr. Gaskill looked out of his window and said, "Oh, it's you, Willie, I'll be down directly," and he proceeded to dress. But the old man was impatient, and commenced knocking violently again. Mr. Gaskill hurried down stairs, and asked what was the matter. "Why, ye shee, Mishter Gashkill," said old Willie, "my dowter hash a bairn bad, and she's in a box (club), an' if it dees afore its baptised, she'll loss' three poond, an' that's a bonny queer 'un."

St. Paul's has always been an Evangelical Church, but it once ran a narrow risk of being transformed in its methods by a Curate of Ritualistic

tendencies, who came to assist Mr. Gaskill in the Parish. He was a very able man, and a splendid worker, but the people of St. Paul's were a stony ground for Ritualistic seed, as will be seen from the following anecdote. He was deploring to a worthy butcher, one of the pillars of the Church, that Christmas Day fell one year on a Sunday. "Very inconvenient for your business," he said, "two Fast Days and two Holy Days coming together." "Hang the Fast Days," said the butcher (he used a stronger term, but this is a book for family reading), "I'll get through my meat anyhow."

At the same time that the Church of St. Paul's was commenced the Nonconformists also set to work. The Wesleyans, who for some time previously had worshipped in a cottage, built a chapel for themselves in Church Street, the prime mover in the business being the late Mr. Blackburn, whilst the Primitives built the old "glory shop" in George Street.

The Presbyterian Church at Mount Pleasant was erected in 1864 at a cost of about £3,600 (including the present Sunday School and Manse).

It was at this period that the village of Tudhoe Colliery began to spring up in the fields on the south side of the highway to Durham, bringing with it a new population for whom church and chapel accommodation had soon to be provided. In November, 1866, the first coals were drawn, and the

pit has worked busily ever since, although there are signs that it is at last becoming exhausted.

At one time it employed no less than 1,700 men and boys, and there are 432 coke ovens attached to the colliery. Three seams have been worked. The Hutton Seam is 45 fathoms from the surface, and the coal is from two to four feet six inches thick, with a seggar band in the middle that provides clay for the well-known Tudhoe bricks. The Busty Seam is 67 fathoms and the Brockwell Seam is 87 fathoms from the surface.

The colliery houses are models of neatness and sound construction, and, compared with other colliery villages, Tudhoe may well be taken as a pattern. The miners are fond of gardening, and the gardens in the Front Street are quite a picture in the summer time.

Tudhoe Colliery is connected with Croxdale Colliery on the North, and Tudhoe Grange Colliery on the South. The shaft at Tudhoe Grange was sunk in 1870, but it is some time now since any coals were drawn from it.

In the year 1866 Tudhoe was severed from Brancepeth Parish, and the new parish of Tudhoe was carved out of the parishes of Brancepeth, Merrington, and Ferryhill. The Church of the Holy Innocents was built in the same year. Its original cost was £1,788, but extensive alterations and im-

provements were subsequently made at a further cost of £1,000. The Church will now seat 413 persons. It is not a handsome building, and the brick interior is only made tolerable by the fine roof, and the paint that thickly covers the walls. The living is a Vicarage valued at £292 a year. It is in the gift of the Dean and Chapter, and is at present held by the Rev. Samuel McKinnon Thompson, M.A. The first incumbent was the present Vicar of Whitworth, the Rev. Edward Abercrombie Wilkinson. Since the erection of the Church it has been found necessary to build an iron chapel of ease to it at Tudhoe Village. It will seat 313 persons, and its cost was £610. The Vicarage is at Tudhoe Village, and stands in fine grounds of its own.

In 1867 the Primitive Methodists built a chapel at Low Spennymoor to seat 300 people, and their brethren at Tudhoe followed their lead by erecting a chapel at Tudhoe Colliery at a cost of £700. The site, however, and much of the stone were contributed by the colliery owners, the Weardale Company, and they also gave a site to the Wesleyans for a building erected by them at a cost of £500 to seat 350.

Mr. Salvin, of Burn Hall, provided for the large Catholic population that had come into the locality by selling the Orphanage in Tudhoe Village to the

Diocese, and applying the proceeds towards the erection on a site given by himself, of the beautiful Church of St. Charles. It was designed as a combination of the Early-English and Decorated styles, and its cost was about £5,000. The sanctuary contains some fine stained glass, three of the windows being memorials, and the altar is a magnificent piece of work brought from Munich. The Catholics have also erected a school for their children on the Durham road.

As the population of the district increased the chapels of the Nonconformists became crowded to suffocation, and one denomination after another removed to more commodious quarters. In 1874 the Wesleyans proceeded to erect a chapel and day schools at Low Spennymoor at a cost of £5,000 on a site given by the Weardale Company, and in 1876 they sold their chapel in Church Street to the Baptists for £450, and erected a very fine place of worship at the corner of Bishop's Close Rows, the total cost being £3,500. This is the largest building in Spennymoor. It will accommodate 900 persons, and some of the finest preachers of the century have discoursed within its walls.

The United Methodists have an iron chapel in Duke Street, the Welsh community have chapels in Clarence Street and at Low Spennymoor, the Methodist New Connexion worship in a neat little

chapel built by Mr. Joseph Love in Oxford Street and afterwards enlarged, and the Christian Mission occupy the comfortable little hall built by Mr. James Thompson Hedley in Oxford Street. The Primitive Methodists have long since left their old chapel in George Street for the fine building occupied by them in Rosa Street, and then there are the Christian Lay Church in Church Street, the Salvation Army in Duncombe Street, and various other denominations in other parts of the town, not excepting the Spiritualists and even the Mormons.

Spennymoor is unrivalled in the number and extent of its spiritual and temperance organizations, but it is also unrivalled in the number of its public houses. These are not only dotted thickly all along the main street of the town, but extend into many of the side streets, and are a source of much drunkenness and all the attendant evils. It is greatly to be regretted that there is no half-way house in Spennymoor between the chapel and the beer saloon. The people of the district have settled down into a quiet law-abiding community who give very little trouble indeed to the police, and if they could only be provided with places of refreshment and entertainment in which they might spend their leisure hours profitably and free from the temptations of idleness, there would soon be no need for any police in the place at all. The Temperance Societies do their

utmost to stem the torrent of iniquity that flows from the public houses, but they have not yet discovered that the root of all evil is idleness. The ordinary pitman or ironworker is not a temperance man, nor will all the meetings in Christendom ever persuade him into teetotalism, but if he could be provided with a more attractive place than the public house in which to spend his hours of idleness there is reason to hope that he might husband his resources, and become a far more useful member of society than he is at present. There is a feeble Church Institute at Spennymoor, and there are reading rooms at Tudhoe Colliery and Mount Pleasant, but the kind of institute that is wanted is a place where men can be supplied with beer if they wish for it under such conditions that they are not likely to get drunk with it. Such institutes have already been tried by liberal-minded ministers of the Gospel in other towns than Spennymoor, and they always succeed because there is sound common sense at the root of them.

One of the greatest influences for good that ever came into the district was the conversion in 1884 of the district of Tudhoe Grange into a separate ecclesiastical parish. This was effected at the instance of the good Bishop Lightfoot, who will long be remembered in the county for his beautiful and unselfish life. He selected as vicar of the new

parish, the Rev. Enos Fenton, a mission preacher of great power, and a little room was taken in Tudhoe Grange which soon became the centre of a band of earnest and active workers. The new vicar begged for money with such unflagging persistence that within a very few months from his settlement in the parish he invited the bishop to lay the foundation stone of the fine church now known as St. Andrew's, Tudhoe Grange, the site being given by the Weardale Company, and the bulk of the cost having already been raised by subscription. It is unfortunate that the church was placed so close to the ironworks, for the recent extensions have almost surrounded it with chimneys and furnaces, but the vicar wished to be in the heart of his people, and many of his communicants go straight from the church to their work. The building is a fine specimen of the Early-English style, and the chancel is separated from the nave by a richly carved oak screen. In 1891 the church was greatly enlarged, and in 1895 a vestry and side chapel were added, the latter being a gift in memory of the late Thomas Charles Baring, one of the principal shareholders in the Weardale Company. The total cost of the building has already exceeded £5,000, and additional features are continually in contemplation. The new chapel contains an altar of surpassing beauty. It came from an old Italian

church, and for several years it lay in fragments exposed to the weather in the old Bessemer building of the ironworks. It was then thought impossible to restore it to its original condition, but the services of a sculptor were engaged, and the rich marbles have now been pieced together with great skill. The altar is so rich that it appears to have dropped into its plain and simple surroundings quite by an accident, and, sooner or later, if it is to remain where it is, it will be necessary to decorate the chapel in harmony with it.

The next undertaking of the vicar was to get the Vicarage built, and this was accomplished in 1888 at the cost of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Then followed a large Mission Hall and Institute, built in the heart of the town on a valuable site given by the Weardale Company. It cost more than £1,500, and a gymnasium has since been added to it, but for some reason or other this has been the least successful of the vicar's undertakings. The Institute has twice come to grief, and even now the building, although in constant use for the spiritual work of the parish, has failed to fill the void between the church and the public house. Another effort has recently been made to revive the social side of the work, and it is to be hoped that its immense possibilities for good may soon be developed under the patient care of the clergy of St. Andrew's.

THE GOOD TIMES.



YEAR by year, the town of Spennymoor continued to increase in growth and prosperity, and at last there came the tremendous revival in trade, known all over the county as the "good times," and occasioned by the disastrous conflict between France and Germany. For several months the industries in those countries were paralysed, and orders that would otherwise have been executed there, came to England instead. The miners commenced to earn fabulous amounts, £1 a day and even more being the regular average, and the lads were paid in proportion, in fact the pays were so heavy that they were made weekly instead of fortnightly. Dean Bridge and Windlestone Collieries were then working well, and the great Rosedale Furnaces at West Cornforth were in full blast. These places alone employed an enormous number of men, all of whom came into Spennymoor for their provisions. The miners are proverbially careless of the morrow, and they spent their money freely. Spennymoor became

wealthy within a very few years, and several of the tradesmen laid the foundations of fortunes that tided them safely over the terrible period of depression that followed these years of prosperity.

The provision dealers kept on raising their prices until the people actually rose in revolt. The milk strike and the meat strike, when the women paraded the town for weeks and delivered speeches, will long be remembered by many of the older residents. The women had fully made up their minds to have at least threepence knocked off the price of meat, and the revolt was no mere accident, but a carefully planned business. It was intended to strike the first blow on the day following the killing-day, so that the butchers might have the meat thrown on their hands, and, it being summer time, the consequences were likely to be serious. The ladies, however, were unable to resist the fatal tendency of their sex to let out the secret, and so the butchers heard of it just in time, and not a single beast was killed in Spennymoor in the first week of the strike. A good deal of meat was afterwards sold on the quiet, even to the chief promoters of the strike, and one butcher in the town boasted that he killed three beasts a week, and sold the meat by means of a ladder over his yard wall.

Sometimes the women would march through

the streets by the hundred, beating tin cans, and the meetings were a source of great amusement to the town. A local printer, named Collard Ellis, wrote a funny report about one of them in a newspaper, but he paid dearly for his wit. The ladies were rampant, and stated emphatically in one of their meetings, what they would do to the unknown writer if only they could set eyes upon him. The unknown writer happened to be present, and was greatly enjoying himself, when a mischievous fellow, who knew all about it, pointed his finger at him. The ladies came down upon their enemy in an avalanche of wrath, and nearly battered the life out of him with their umbrellas.

The strike was a god-send to the provision dealers, and one of them did a roaring trade in some tainted hams. He had bought them too cheaply, and was wondering what he should do with them. Of course, he at once sent out the bellman, and his shop was literally besieged with customers.

Mr. Collard Ellis was the first person in Spennymoor to venture a newspaper—at least there were two first persons, for Mr. Wetherell, Senr., published a paper on the very same day. There was room in Spennymoor for a newspaper, but not for two, and so they both died a natural death. Singular to say, many years later, history repeated itself, only this time there were three competitors in the field.

Mr. Snowball's paper lived the longest, but it was killed by the miners' strike of 1892, and since then the town has had to depend for its local news upon the generosity of editors from a distance.

There are many in Spennymoor who pray for the good times to return, nevertheless they were a calamity to the district, for they laid the seeds of extravagance and intemperance, and placed upon its feet the hideous vice of gambling. It soon became manifest that there was too much money astir. Fights and brutality to women became matters of every day occurrence, and terrible scenes were continually to be witnessed in all the vacant pieces of ground attached to the public houses. Some of the people wasted their money on the choicest of food and wines, and one man is said to have been so blatantly independent that he drove up to Tudhoe Colliery in a carriage and pair to seek work. Even the greyhounds were fed upon fresh beef and mutton. Spennymoor became a by-word in all the district round, and decent folk were ashamed to own that they lived there. To make its evil reputation worse there occurred in 1872 the murder of Joseph Wain. It was hardly a murder : a drunken row would be the more accurate term for it. Nevertheless, two men, Hugh Slane and John Hayes, were hanged for it, and two others, George Besley and Terence Rice, were condemned

to death, but were afterwards reprieved, and sentenced to a terrible period of penal servitude, from which they have now been released.

It never occurred to anyone that there was a cause for this extraordinary period of prosperity. The people of Spennymoor fully made up their minds that the town was a gold mine, and all sorts of wild schemes for its development were projected. One of them, the ill-fated Whitworth Racecourse Company, came into existence only to collapse a very few years later. There were already races held on a part of the old course, but the meeting was purely a local event of no particular interest to the bookmakers. Popular prices were charged for admission, and it is said that in one year, when a famous horse named Bothwell had been entered for one of the races, the attendance was so large that the shareholders reaped a dividend of 80 per cent. Robert Prudhoe took note of this fact, and he and Mr. Stratton put their heads together, and floated an opposition company. A considerable capital was collected, mainly from the savings of widows and orphans, and with the all-powerful aid of the publicans the Company was launched. The land at the back of Spennymoor House was leased for the racecourse, and a huge brick grand-stand was erected upon it. This was supplemented by the wooden stand of the present course, and the

first meeting was heralded with a flourish of trumpets. Spennymoor went racing mad, and Robert Prudhoe, the man who had worked harder for the development of the town than any one who had lived in it up to that time, went down in the torrent and lost all he possessed.

Directly the Company was floated, it was obvious that accommodation would have to be provided for the expected army of bookmakers and racecourse thieves, so Mr. Prudhoe burnt his boats and launched everything he possessed into the building of a big hotel close to the station. The old "North Eastern" was the result; a great square building that stood a good deal further back than the present structure. Mr. Vyner, the well-known owner of race horses, had married into the Shafto family, and it was hoped that his influence would carry the Spennymoor meeting into the front rank, but it never even occurred to him to attend, and the meetings fell flat, and the gate money was too heavy for Spennymoor pockets, and the whole affair was stupidly managed. The racecourse was a failure and the hotel became a "white elephant." The company collapsed, and Mr. Prudhoe was a ruined man. A few years later, the brick grandstand was caught in a high wind, and fell in a moment to pieces, and in 1892 the old "North Eastern" was burnt to the ground.

o

The races still survive under a new company in a field at the back of Carlton Terrace, but the Spennymoor people take very little interest in them. They are not even advertised in the district, but on the day of the meeting excursions come into the town from all parts, and the road up to the racecourse is filled by an evil looking crew, whose baneful presence is like a breath of poison to the atmosphere of the place.

It is a relief to turn from this picture of degradation to the brighter picture of the Store. The sudden inrush of money during the good times decided some of the steadier people of the district to invite the Bishop Auckland Co-operators to establish a branch of their society in Spennymoor. A previous experiment in co-operative butchering had been tried in the shop adjoining the Bridge Hotel, but it had come to grief. Nevertheless, the Auckland people thought favourably of the new project, and in 1872 the Spennymoor branch was commenced under the management of Mr. H. N. Kellett in the shop in King Street now used by the Store temporarily for butchering purposes. In 1874 they were employing eight men, in 1882 thirty-nine, and now the number is 65. They are at present engaged upon extensive alterations, so that in 1897 the number of their employés will be further increased.

The business steadily outgrew the little shop in

King Street, and when Mr. Prudhoe secured the North-Eastern site, he was approached by the committee to see if he would sell it to them for their new building. Mr. Prudhoe would probably have come to terms with them, but he felt that he would be doing wrong to give any facilities for the development of a business so hostile to the interests of his fellow-tradesmen, and consequently the members were compelled to be content with a site at the high end of Spennymoor. They removed into their new premises in 1876, but the place was burnt down in 1882. The present fine building then arose like a phoenix from the ashes, and since then the Store has never looked back. In the early part of 1892 it was subjected to a severe test. This was the time of the last County strike, when every industry was silent for thirteen weeks, and in some instances for several months. Those who had saved money in the Store were compelled to withdraw it piecemeal until none remained. Nevertheless, it successfully stood the strain, and there can be no doubt that its timely aid saved many from starvation.

At the time of the fire the yearly turnover of the Spennymoor Branch was £74,000. At the present time it is £90,000, and out of this in a single year no less than £17,000 has been distributed as net profit amongst the members. In view of the recent extensions at the Store these figures

have a terrible significance for the Spennymoor tradespeople.

There is now a store at Tudhoe Colliery, but this is a separate undertaking. The people of Tudhoe Colliery wanted the Bishop Auckland authorities to give them a branch to themselves. This the Auckland people refused to do, consequently the members at Tudhoe Colliery commenced a Store of their own, and their business has now grown to considerable dimensions, and pays a very respectable dividend.

It is distressing to think of Spennymoor without its shops and markets, nevertheless the tendency of the age is to centralise all business into one huge Store. At the present time Spennymoor on a pay Saturday is a sight to be seen. The competition with the Store is so keen that prices are cut down to the lowest possible level, and gigantic trading companies are establishing themselves in the place, and cutting each other's throats in their eagerness for business. This is, of course, a manifest advantage to the town, which now has the reputation of being one of the cheapest places to live in to be found in the North of England. People come to it from all parts for their provisions, and the main street is crowded with stalls, whilst the covered markets are filled with butchers, many of them from a distance.

THE EXPLOSION AT TUDHOE COLLIERY.



THE good times began to go back in 1873 and year by year things became worse and worse. The pays came down with a run to less than their normal rate and flour went up to almost famine prices. The Rose-dale Furnaces, at West Cornforth, the largest in the world, were damped down, and pit after pit closed. Windlestone, over which the Peases had spent a quarter of a million of money, was laid in through water troubles, and Dean Bridge, which employed about 1,400 men and boys, was killed by an outrageous royalty rent. Spennymoor was the market town for all these places, and it may easily be conceived that the stoppage of so many of the staple industries of the district must have told with terrible effect upon the town. People left the locality in utter despair until only one-half of the houses were occupied and these at three and four shillings a fortnight, and the weakest of the Building Societies,

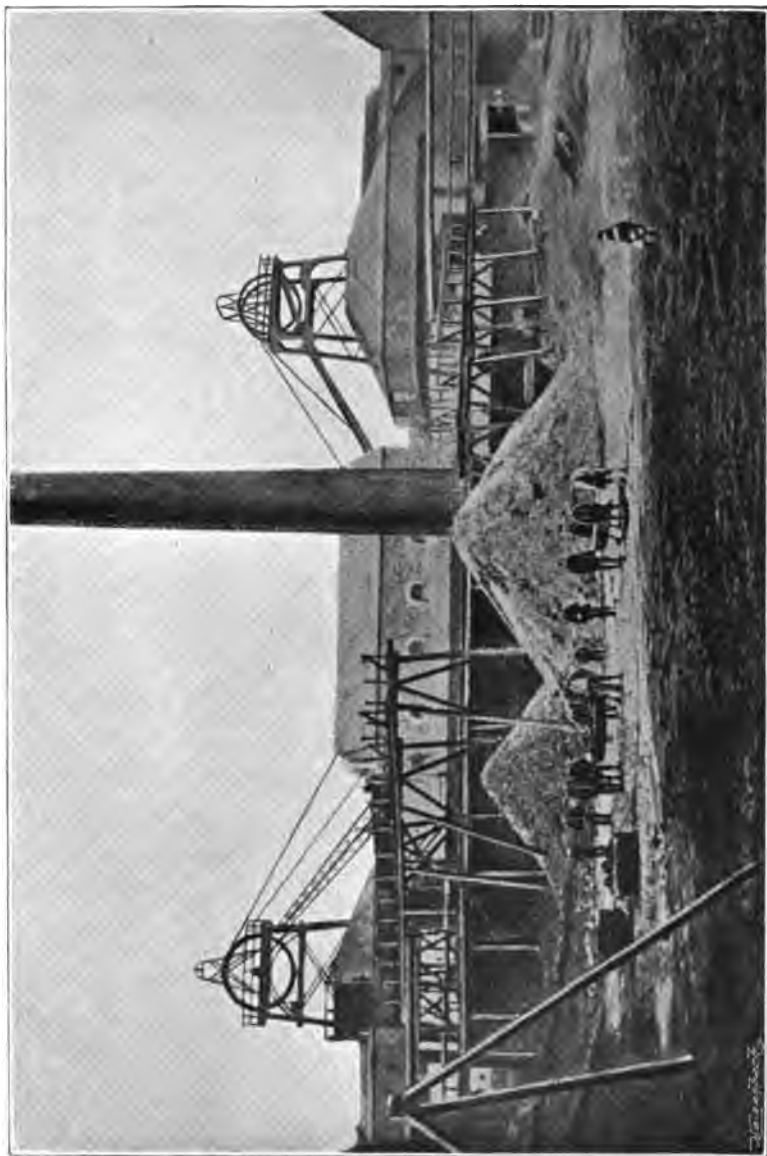
with so much of this empty property thrown upon their hands, collapsed altogether and became the ruin of many a thrifty workman. To crown the tide of misfortunes there came the explosion at Tudhoe Colliery. Tuesday, the 18th April, 1882, was the date of it. There must surely have been something unusual in the conjunction of the planets during that period. First came Seaham, then Trimdon, then Tudhoe, and twenty-four hours later West Stanley. Singular to say the managers of Tudhoe and West Stanley were both named William Johnson.

The Tudhoe pitmen were uneasy for several days prior to the explosion, although the mine was reputed to be one of the safest in the county. Some even threw up their work rather than go into the pit, and the prevalent uneasiness was intensified by an old woman named Fortescue—said to have been the mother of the notorious actress—who predicted that within six days there would be an explosion with loss of life at Tudhoe. She stood outside one of the schools talking to the children about it, and the women became so agitated that the police felt it their duty to go and see her, and try and put a stop to her prophecies. The dreaded six days passed safely over, and the women began to breathe freely again, yet in a fortnight's time the explosion came, and 37 men and boys lost their lives. It occurred in the Brockwell Seam, and the

districts mainly affected were known as the No. 6 way, and the Sunderland Bridge way. A drizzling rain was falling at half-past one in the morning, when suddenly those who were awake in the houses heard a slight booming noise, and felt the ground oscillate beneath their feet. Inspector Elliott (then a sergeant stationed at Tudhoe) was thrown from his balance against the door of his house just as he was coming out, and in some of the houses the chimney ornaments fell to the ground, and were broken. A few of those who noticed the shock hurried to the pit's mouth, and by-and-bye a man named Lewins came to the surface with the news. He at once ran for the officials, and by a quarter-past two the preparations for a descent of the shaft were completed. The first to go down were John Naisbit, John Taylor, Matthew Elliot, and Thomas Thompson. Mr. Johnson lived at Tudhoe, and had not then had time to arrive. The cage went smoothly at first, but just as they neared the Brockwell Seam its speed began to slacken, and they saw that the guides were twisted. Then it jammed completely, but with a great effort they forced it down until it was only twelve feet from the seam. Here it became fast held, and it was suggested that a ladder be procured from the surface to take them the rest of the distance, but one of the men, determined to lose no time, got out of the cage, and

slid down one of the guides. His brave but perilous example was followed by the other members of the party, and then the cage returned to bring down the manager. It is characteristic of the man that before he committed himself to the unknown perils at the bottom of the shaft he knelt down and engaged for a moment in prayer. One of the men who accompanied him was destined never to return alive.

Then they commenced the exploration. The first person they came to was Andrew Sutton, a brakesman. His leg and arm were broken, and he had sustained various other injuries, but he was still living and eventually recovered. The explosion appeared to have thrown him bodily through the air from one side of his engine to the other, for when he regained consciousness he was on the side of the engine opposite to the place he was sitting in when the explosion occurred. He was in great pain, and shivering with cold, so they gave him some stimulants and placed him in safe care, and then continued their search. Close at hand they came upon a lad named William Patterson, who, strange to say, had passed safely through the Trimdon explosion only a few days before. He was alive but terribly burnt, and ultimately succumbed to his injuries. The next to be found were alive, four of them uninjured, but the rest burned about the arms and chest and hurt by falling stone. Two of these,



AFTER THE EXPLOSION.—BRINGING THE BODIES TO BANK.

George Tindall and Hugh Jones had worked in the West pit unconscious that anything had happened, and were only apprised of the terrible news when the exploring party came to them. It soon became clear that the trouble was in two separate districts, so the party divided themselves up and arranged to meet at four o'clock to report progress. But when the time for the rendezvous arrived they realized the painful fact that two of their number, Naisbit and White were missing. Leaving directions with the the next party of explorers to search for them they pressed on. The atmosphere now became vitiated, and great care had to be exercised lest they should be caught by the after-damp.

A number of men were found alive and sent to the surface, where by now a crowd of some 5,000 people were assembled. At first there were hopes that the fatality had not been so serious as anticipated, but by-and-bye the news came that the first of the bodies had been recovered, and preparations began to be made for a mortuary in one of the fitting-shops. The first to be brought to bank was Michael Cairns. His brother, Robert and his father, James Cairns, were found some days later. Then came Andrew Coldwell and Joseph Faulkner, their bodies being found in a refuge hole sadly bruised and burnt. At the entrance to the Shieldfield way, the explorers came upon the body of Peter Strong; but

they now began to be very uneasy about their brave companions, White and Naisbit, who had not yet turned up, and Thomas Thompson and some others were directed to investigate the portion of the mine where they had last been seen. At last, between nine and ten o'clock in the morning, they came upon the two poor fellows, lying close together near the entrance to the New No. 5. Naisbit's heart was still beating, but White was dead. Naisbit was taken to the surface and revived by unremitting attention. At first it was feared that he would succumb, but ultimately strength returned to him, and he was able to explain how the dreaded after-damp had overtaken them. There were some boys in the No. 6 way, and Naisbit was anxious to see that they were saved. White assented, and they proceeded in safety for about seven hundred yards from the shaft, when they saw that all the stoppings had been blown out. Nevertheless, they proceeded, and immediately the after-damp collected around them. They turned to retreat, but it was behind them as well as before. They made a rush out-bye, and suddenly White dropped. Naisbit said, "Get up, Bill," but he replied, "I doubt I cannot." Then Naisbit himself fell, nor did he remember anything more, until he found himself in bed, being nursed to consciousness.

No more bodies were recovered until night.

The majority were in the Shieldfield district, more than a mile from the shaft, and the remainder were in the North-West district in quite another direction. After great labour in replacing the stoppings and cutting through falls of stone, the explorers came to the ponies. Out of 83 in the mine, 68 were killed. In one of the headways, Joseph Richards and the boy Patterson were found alive, with a dead pony between them. Richards, however, was badly hurt, and died on the Thursday. The last body recovered that night was that of Henry Sloggett, and towards two o'clock in the morning, the explorers came upon the bodies of Wm. Thomas, James Rhymer, Wm. Lambton and Robert Artus, all of whom had been killed by the after-damp. Between ten and eleven o'clock, two more of the bodies were reached. An affecting scene then met the sight of the explorers. The bodies were those of Joseph Marsh and Thomas Cook, and they were clasped in each other's arms, having apparently laid down to die when the deadly after-damp came round them. This completed the roll of the dead in the Shieldfield way, and they next went to the Croxdale way, where John Brown and a lad named William Smith were found, the boy being fearfully mutilated and charred from head to foot, the soles of his feet alone escaping. Apparently he had been caught in the full power of

the blast. James Whitter and Thomas Jefferson, were found in No. 5, Whitter with his jacket over his head, as though he had hoped by this means to save himself from the styth. On the Thursday morning, the Sunderland Bridge way was opened out and the bodies of three lads, Thomas Armstrong, George Stephenson and John Lawson were recovered. Then followed Jonathan Gair and Wm. Pinkney, the latter being terribly mutilated; and finally, George Bowes, Joseph Mitchell, Thomas Snowdon, Matthew Rutter, James Shaw, William Curry, Hugh Armstrong, John Cherry, John Burns, Edward Jones Roberts, John Lambton and Michael Rivers, Junr. The father of Michael Rivers was found near the shaft insensible, but he ultimately recovered. Robert Richardson, an old man, was found with one foot blown off and other injuries, but he was rescued alive, and Wm. Urwin, with two of his companions, worked their way to the Tudhoe Grange pit, from whence they were taken safely to bank. The others saved were J. Mutton, J. G. Wallace, Philip Dalziel, Thomas Wilson, W. Milburn, T. Milburn, D. Eagle, T. Chapman, S. Hockin, W. Hockin, S. Cook, A. Dowdell, C. Dixon, G. Wood, P. Boyle, John Farridge, George Eddy, E. Edwards, J. Baglin, John Maughan and J. Blenkinsopp.

The search parties worked unremittingly until

the Saturday, when the last of the bodies were brought to bank. The bodies when they arrived at the pit head were examined by the doctors in attendance, and then wrapped in wadding and flannel and placed in temporary coffins to be carried to their homes. These arrangements were carried out by Mr. G. H. Wraith, whose services on that trying occasion will long be remembered with gratitude by the people of Tudhoe Colliery, Messrs. Rogerson and Du Pre, the managing directors of the Weardale Iron and Coal Company, also worked unremittingly and spared neither trouble nor expense in providing everything that was calculated to relieve in any way the feelings of the bereaved families.

Nearly all of the dead were buried in Holy Innocents' Churchyard, and on the Friday of that awful week Bishop Lightfoot came to Tudhoe to conduct some of the funerals, and spoke the kindest of words to the mourners. "Will you not," he said, "breathe one prayer for the mourners at Stanley? Yes, it will purge your grief of some little selfishness if you let your hearts go out to these also. How can I attempt to console you? God only can comfort you, God's boundless heart alone is wide enough to comfort you. What can I say of the dead? We commit these bodies to the grave in the sure hope of a joyful resurrection. These terrible disasters have always being redeemed by some act of heroism or

other. It was so at Seaham, at Trimdon, and has been so at Tudhoe. One or another has died in the attempt to rescue his brothers. This is our poor unworthy way of mourning those who have died in the performance of a duty like this. We look upon this as a life lost. Is it really so? Are we not the better? Is not Tudhoe the better? Are not all who read the account of this disaster the better for an example of heroism for himself? Who so fit to meet God as he who was carried away in an act of heroism and self-sacrifice, and for others?"

The first to be committed to the ground was William White. He was 56 years of age and left a widow and family to mourn his loss.

The Weardale Company behaved generously to all who suffered by the disaster. It is said that the explosion cost them no less than £15,000.

A cross was afterwards erected at the corner of Tudhoe Lane to the memory of those who lost their lives, but in 1891, when a cemetery was formed for Tudhoe township, it was removed to where it now stands at the end of the drive. It is elaborately sculptured, and bears the names of the dead.

April 18th 1881:April 18th 1881:

REFERENCE.			
Article described	Observed	Value	
Autumnal drainage	do	do	
Wind or Storm Drainage	Marked	Wind	
Wet or Shallow	do	do	
Ice Drainage	do	do	
Ice Suppression	do	do	
Position of Surface	do	do	
Wind Tunnels	do	do	
Position of Channels	do	do	

SP	NAME	DISTRICT	SP	NAME
1	Rob Green	San Diego County	25	Patricia Jeyaraj
2	John Galt	San Diego County	26	John Jeyaraj
3	Joe Gaudin	San Diego County	27	Jim Jones
4	W. Gray	21st San Jacinto	28	John Jones
5	W. Gray	San Diego County	29	John Kiefer
6	W. Gray	San Diego County	30	John Kiefer
7	Thomas	San Diego County	31	John Kiefer
8	Thomas	San Diego County	32	John Kiefer
9	Thomas	San Diego County	33	John Kiefer
10	Thomas	San Diego County	34	John Kiefer
11	Thomas	San Diego County	35	John Kiefer
12	Thomas	San Diego County	36	John Kiefer
13	Thomas	San Diego County	37	John Kiefer
14	Thomas	San Diego County	38	John Kiefer
15	Thomas	San Diego County	39	John Kiefer
16	Thomas	San Diego County	40	John Kiefer
17	Thomas	San Diego County	41	John Kiefer
18	Thomas	San Diego County	42	John Kiefer
19	Thomas	San Diego County	43	John Kiefer
20	Thomas	San Diego County	44	John Kiefer
21	Thomas	San Diego County	45	John Kiefer
22	Thomas	San Diego County	46	John Kiefer
23	Thomas	San Diego County	47	John Kiefer
24	Thomas	San Diego County	48	John Kiefer
25	Thomas	San Diego County	49	John Kiefer
26	Thomas	San Diego County	50	John Kiefer
27	Thomas	San Diego County	51	John Kiefer
28	Thomas	San Diego County	52	John Kiefer
29	Thomas	San Diego County	53	John Kiefer
30	Thomas	San Diego County	54	John Kiefer
31	Thomas	San Diego County	55	John Kiefer
32	Thomas	San Diego County	56	John Kiefer
33	Thomas	San Diego County	57	John Kiefer
34	Thomas	San Diego County	58	John Kiefer
35	Thomas	San Diego County	59	John Kiefer
36	Thomas	San Diego County	60	John Kiefer
37	Thomas	San Diego County	61	John Kiefer
38	Thomas	San Diego County	62	John Kiefer
39	Thomas	San Diego County	63	John Kiefer
40	Thomas	San Diego County	64	John Kiefer
41	Thomas	San Diego County	65	John Kiefer
42	Thomas	San Diego County	66	John Kiefer
43	Thomas	San Diego County	67	John Kiefer
44	Thomas	San Diego County	68	John Kiefer
45	Thomas	San Diego County	69	John Kiefer
46	Thomas	San Diego County	70	John Kiefer
47	Thomas	San Diego County	71	John Kiefer
48	Thomas	San Diego County	72	John Kiefer
49	Thomas	San Diego County	73	John Kiefer
50	Thomas	San Diego County	74	John Kiefer
51	Thomas	San Diego County	75	John Kiefer
52	Thomas	San Diego County	76	John Kiefer
53	Thomas	San Diego County	77	John Kiefer
54	Thomas	San Diego County	78	John Kiefer
55	Thomas	San Diego County	79	John Kiefer
56	Thomas	San Diego County	80	John Kiefer
57	Thomas	San Diego County	81	John Kiefer
58	Thomas	San Diego County	82	John Kiefer
59	Thomas	San Diego County	83	John Kiefer
60	Thomas	San Diego County	84	John Kiefer
61	Thomas	San Diego County	85	John Kiefer
62	Thomas	San Diego County	86	John Kiefer
63	Thomas	San Diego County	87	John Kiefer
64	Thomas	San Diego County	88	John Kiefer
65	Thomas	San Diego County	89	John Kiefer
66	Thomas	San Diego County	90	John Kiefer
67	Thomas	San Diego County	91	John Kiefer
68	Thomas	San Diego County	92	John Kiefer
69	Thomas	San Diego County	93	John Kiefer
70	Thomas	San Diego County	94	John Kiefer
71	Thomas	San Diego County	95	John Kiefer
72	Thomas	San Diego County	96	John Kiefer
73	Thomas	San Diego County	97	John Kiefer
74	Thomas	San Diego County	98	John Kiefer
75	Thomas	San Diego County	99	John Kiefer
76	Thomas	San Diego County	100	John Kiefer

The various shades of RED BLOODGLASS (from brown to
 to BLACK to
 to BLUE to

Doubled, 1980, Dartington.

THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOSION.



DIRECTLY after the explosion an inquiry was held at Tudhoe to ascertain the cause of it, and the Government was represented by Mr. Arnold Morley, who subsequently became Postmaster General. The annexed plan is reduced from the plan attached to Mr. Morley's report, the colouring alone being omitted. To make it clear to persons who know nothing of mining a word of explanation may be of service. The words "East Pit" mark the position of the Tudhoe Colliery shaft, and the words "Down-cast Shaft," at the top of the plan, mark the position of the Croxdale Shaft. The top of the plan is N.N.E. The Sunderland Bridge Way crosses the Chair Lane at right angles underground, between Tudhoe and Nicky Nack, and the Alma Bank goes right across the village.

The Hett Whin Dyke is a strip of whinstone that appears to have rushed up in a molten form

through a narrow crack in the earth. It can be seen cropping out on the surface of the land at Nicky Nack and Partnerships, and underground the coal is charred and useless for several feet on either side of it. The ways are the main waggon ways on which the coal is drawn in trains or sets of tubs from the workings, and the little squares are pillars of coal left to support the surface until the workings have reached the limit fixed by the manager. The pillars are then removed one by one, and the wooden props that have previously supported the waggon ways are pulled away by the deputies, so that the roof falls, and the entire district becomes blocked by a mass of stone and débris, and is then known as "goaf." The goaf on the plan is indicated by shading. Almost the whole of the Brockwell Seam at Tudhoe is now in goaf, most of the pillars shown on the plan having been removed since the date of the explosion. The seam being only 3ft. 6in. in thickness, the ways are rarely high enough to allow of a man standing upright.

The mine is ventilated by a current of air drawn in at the downcast shaft. The air is prevented from escaping into the workings by numerous stoppings that block up the spaces between the pillars. The air is thus carried to the face of the coal wherever the men are working, and ultimately returns by another route to the foot of the up-cast

shaft. Whenever the return is required to cross an intake a tube is constructed for the purpose, and this is known as an air-crossing.

The tubs are drawn from the face of the coal by ponies until they come to the main waggon way, where they are formed into a train or set and drawn by a rope to the foot of the shaft. The main waggon ways are generally free from gas because of the strong current of fresh air that rushes through them. These few words of introduction will help to explain the various theories advanced as to the cause of the explosion.

It was decided at the finish that it originated in No. 6 Way, West pit, through a pocket of gas being set free by a fall of stone upon a set of tubs going in-by in which a man was riding with a naked light. This was the theory advanced by the mining engineers who gave evidence at the enquiry, nevertheless it is clear from the Government Blue Book that Mr. Morley adopted their explanation with a good deal of reluctance. Two other theories were advanced. The first was improbable. It was suggested that a large accumulation of gas might have forced its way down from the goaf at the western end of the Alma Bank until it reached a caution lamp or naked light, indicating that only safety lamps were to be used beyond that point in the mine. Against this, however, it was stated that the gas would surely

P

be carried away by the rush of air in the intake, also that the caution lamp had been extinguished more than an hour before the explosion. The evidence as to the extinguishment was hardly satisfactory, nevertheless there can be little doubt that it was done.

The other theory was a far more plausible one, and there is reason now to believe it to have been founded upon sound reasoning. It was ascertained after the explosion that a shot must have been fired in the main intake of the Sunderland Bridge way almost at the very moment of the explosion. On the western side of the waggon-way, and about 60 yards from the entrance to the Shieldfield way was a stenton or passage leading from the intake into the return, with double doors to it. The manager wished to enlarge the doorways, and two experienced men, Coldwell and Faulkner, were seen to be drilling a hole in the roof of the stenton shortly before the explosion. The bodies of these men were found terribly burnt in a refuge hole some little distance away from the shot hole. It is customary for men to retire to a refuge hole as soon as they have fired a shot, a refuge hole being a place into which persons coming along the main waggon way may step for safety whilst a set of tubs is passing them. From this it was inferred that the shot had just been fired. It was impossible that there could have been any

appreciable quantity of gas in the waggon way so close to the shaft, but it has been proved recently by conclusive experiments that the coal dust on the timbers of a main waggon way is highly explosive. The dust is exceedingly fine and dry, and if by any chance a shot fired in a main waggon way should send out a tongue of flame, there is little doubt that the dust, violently agitated into the air by the vibration, would explode in contact with the flame.

For many years the coal-dust theory was looked upon as an absurdity, but laboratory experiments, combined with the experience gained from the circumstances of a number of modern explosions, that at Brancepeth being the latest, have rendered the theory practically unanswerable.

The timbers near the stenton were admittedly coated with this fine dust. It had been the custom in the mine to water the dust on the floor, but nobody had ever thought of sweeping the dust from the timbers. It is significant that the men who lost their lives by burning and violence were discovered, not in the workings, but in the main waggon ways. Those found in the workings were killed by the after-damp, and this is a clear indication, firstly, that the explosion originated in one of the intakes, and, secondly, that gas was hardly a likely cause of it. Assuming that coal dust was the explanation of it, the theory is strengthened by the fact that explosive dust is

rarely to be found in the workings, but only in the main waggon ways, where it is blown from the coal in the tubs through the tremendous rush of air along the intake. At the same time it must be admitted that if coal dust can be a medium of carrying explosive force it is quite possible that the explosion may have commenced with gas, and still have been carried through the mine by means of the dust.


It is clear that the gas could not by any possibility have been an accumulation. If gas was the primary cause of the explosion the only manner by which it could have been released into the intake was by the fall of stone in the No. 6 way. One of the men had been carrying a naked light, and the tubs were undoubtedly off the way, and from this it was assumed that the tubs in going in-bye had knocked out one of the timbers, and caused the fall of stone.

It was singular, however, that the bodies buried beneath the stone were as badly burned as the bodies exposed to the full power of the blast, and that men, who had presumably been riding in the tubs, must have been blown out of them by the force of the blast. If, then, the fall of stone preceded the explosion it would naturally be expected that all the men would have been found in the tubs, and that those who were completely buried by the stone would have been to some extent pro-

tected by it from the flame. Of course it was said at the enquiry that the whole thing must have happened in a moment, nevertheless the point is one worth noting. Then again, it was found that the tail rope of the set, which drew nothing but its own weight, had been snapped in two, evidently by a jerk from the drum, yet the hauling rope was not broken at all. This would suggest that the force of the explosion must have come in-bye instead of out-over. Not only was the tail rope broken, but the drum itself was broken, and this would further suggest that the force at the back of the set was terrible enough to drive it right off the way, thereby knocking down some of the timbers, and loosening the roof. The only other circumstance that ought to be mentioned is that the timbers and stoppings were blown both in-bye and out-bye in the most bewildering fashion, so that it was quite impossible to tell the direction of the blast from the position in which they were lying. Generally speaking their direction tended to support the theory that the explosion commenced at the set, but the same phenomena have been observed in the case of later explosions, and it is now suggested that the flame in its course burns up the air and causes a vacuum, so that the timbers and stoppings protected from the explosion are caught by the tremendous back-draught and driven in the opposite direction.

This is all that can be said about the explosion at Tudhoe. Whatever may have been its cause, it is clear that the dust may have had something to do with it, consequently it is a mistake in any mine to allow coal dust to accumulate.

THE SCHOOLS AND THE PARK.

F the public schools in the district the National School at Spennymoor was first in order of date, and since its erection by Bishop Gray, it has been enlarged and greatly improved. It is the only building in Spennymoor with any pretence to architectural merit, nevertheless, to the eternal disgrace of the parishioners of St. Paul's, it has recently been disfigured by the erection of two hideous brick porches, quite out of keeping with the building, and an eyesore to all passers-by.

The Wesleyan School at Spennymoor dates from 1861, the cost of the school and of the master's house in the rear, being about £2,000. The Wesleyans have also a school at Low Spennymoor.

The National School at Low Spennymoor was erected in 1869. In recent years it has been found necessary to enlarge it, and Mr. Raine, the present

master, is so popular with the children, that the accommodation of the building has lately been taxed to the utmost, so much so, that the vicar has been compelled to take in the Parochial Hall.

The Catholic School, situate on the main road to Durham, was built in 1873, and is the most comfortable school in the district.

The Board School at Tudhoe Colliery was built by the Weardale Company in 1876, but in the same year, after a great deal of local excitement, a School Board was formed to take in the United Districts of Spennymoor, Ferryhill, East Howle, Tudhoe, Merrington, and Whitworth, and the Weardale Company ultimately handed over their Tudhoe School to the new Board. The Board School for Tudhoe Grange was built in 1879 at a cost of £4,600 and the Board School for Spennymoor was built at the same time, the cost being £8,000. These two buildings are both situate on high ground and have quite an imposing effect when viewed from a distance. They are conveniently arranged, and the Board have taken care to make them bright and attractive.

To make the list of the Spennymoor schools complete a passing reference must be made to the singular institution at Mount Pleasant known as the Co-operative Governess. A few years ago a lady was engaged as a governess by some of the

Spennymoor parents who wished their children to learn manners as well as mathematics, and they guaranteed her a sufficient income to justify her in remaining. From time to time the governess has been changed, but in recent years the institution has become so popular that there is a serious danger of its degeneration into that worst enemy of educational progress, the private school.

The public schools of Spennymoor have reached a high state of efficiency, and, however high may be the rate that maintains them, it cannot be too strongly urged upon the ratepayers that this is the safest of all investments for their money. The rate is indeed heavy, nor is it likely ever to be less, but an efficient system of education is of priceless importance to the welfare and prosperity of the town. There is a growing feeling that some of the children's time is wasted upon subjects that can be of no possible service to them afterwards, and it is earnestly to be hoped that no time may be lost in introducing into the schools the elements of technical and manual training. Already a step has been taken in the right direction by the establishment of cookery teaching for the girls, and the time will come when every boy must have tools placed in his hands, so that he may be taught the vital necessity of absolute accuracy and honesty in workmanship. These things are essential to us if we

are to hold our own among the nations of the world, and it is too late to leave it until the children have left school.

Up to two years ago the youths of Spennymoor who wanted technical instruction were compelled to journey to Durham and even Newcastle to get it. In 1895 all this was changed. The County Education Committee offered to place at the disposal of the Spennymoor Urban Council a sum sufficient to enable them to bring the best possible teachers to the town in all the technical subjects of greatest local value, but the Council were afraid of the ratepayers, and rejected the offer. However, fortunately for Spennymoor, they were a few patriotic men in the Council who were willing to take the risk upon their own shoulders, and these have since succeeded in establishing one of the largest Technical Schools in the county; in fact, the work has already grown to such dimensions that it will become necessary before long to concentrate it in one central institute, where the young people of both sexes may spend their leisure time pleasantly and profitably. The work of technical instruction is destined to play a considerable part in the future history of Spennymoor, and therefore it is only right that the names of those who commenced it should be recorded in this book. The members of the Council were Dr. Anderson, Messrs. Byers, Berriman, and

Dodd, and the Rev. S. M. Thompson, and they were joined from outside by Messrs. Rhymer, Rivers, and Smith, and the Rev. William Keir. The classes have now been taken over by the Urban Council, and the Technical Instruction Committee is now a committee of the Council.

One of the healthiest institutions that Spennymoor has reason to be proud of is its two companies of Volunteers, 220 strong. The enthusiasm for volunteering created by Dr. Hawks died out in course of time, but later on an attempt was made by Mr. Hall, of Wood Vue, an old artillery sergeant, to raise a battery of artillery in connection with the movement at Seaham Harbour. The response was immediate, and no less than one hundred men, none of them under 5ft. 7in., gave in their names for enrolment, but the usual government red tape succeeded in strangling the project. Nothing was then done in the matter until Mr. Junor came to the town, but in 1886, mainly with his assistance, the present company was formed, and it has flourished to such an extent that it is now in contemplation to build a spacious drill hall and officers' club close to the brewery.

Another institution that Spennymoor has reason to be proud of is the Victoria Park. It was felt that something ought to be done to commemorate the fiftieth year of the Queen's reign, and, in order

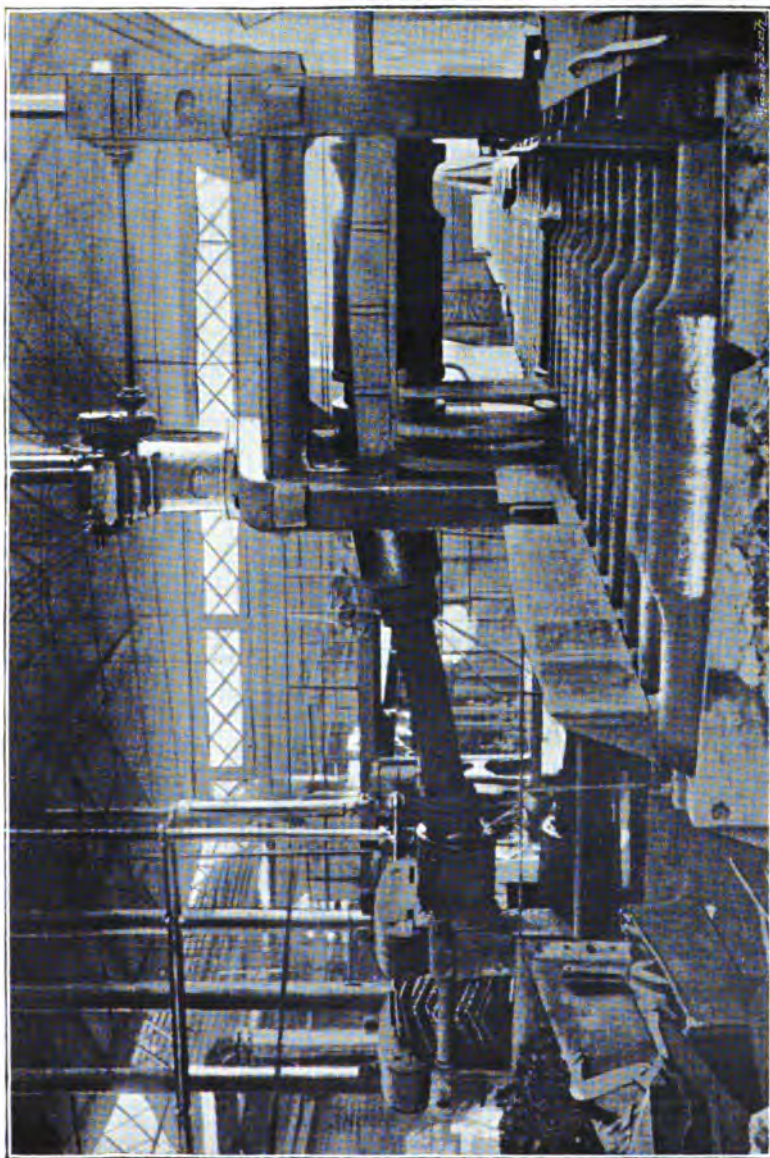
to test the public feeling, a meeting was convened by Mr. Colley, the Chairman of the Local Board. As the outcome of this meeting, it was decided to acquire 16 acres of land for a Public Park and recreation ground, and the late Mr. Shafto generously offered to grant a lease of some suitable land for 99 years, at a nominal rent, and to contribute £100 as well. The project was taken up heartily by the public, and Messrs. Reay, Junor, Colley, Heslop, and Dr. Anderson were appointed Trustees on behalf of the subscribers. A number of contributions were obtained, and Mrs. Shafto undertook a bazaar at Whitworth that added nearly £100 to the funds. The farmers and tradesmen lent their horses and carts, and various donors contributed bridges and other accessories. Mr. Rogerson, the late General Manager of the Wear-dale Company, presented a pair of swans, the Rev. E. A. Wilkinson gave the band-stand, and Mr. Shafto sent a large quantity of trees and shrubs from Whitworth. Mr. John Tate, the Whitworth agent, laid out the ground and actively superintended the work, and at last on the 21st June, 1889, the Park was ready to be opened to the public. The day was observed as a general holiday. A great procession marched to the Park, and all the Spennymoor children were regaled with suitable refreshments, to keep the day in their remembrance.

Within the last few years the Park has been greatly improved, and the trees have grown to quite a respectable size. In 1894 it was taken over by the Local Board, and is now the property of the entire Urban district. Last year its attractions for the children were greatly enhanced by the conversion of a considerable area into a playground, furnished with swings, giant strides, and gymnastic apparatus of various kinds. It is now quite a popular resort, and when the band is playing it presents an animated appearance. The people of Spennymoor owe to the Park Trustees a great debt of gratitude, if only for the fact that they have provided close to the homes of the poorest, a place where children can be sent to play, and where men and women, weary from the day's toil, can go and rest their tired limbs, and imagine for a time that they are out in the country.

THE EXTENSION OF THE IRONWORKS.



EVERY little occurred that was eventful in the life of Spennymoor, during the five years prior to 1892, but the year 1892 will be always remembered in the district as the year of the great strike, and more important still, the year when the great Cogging Mill was laid down at the Ironworks. The strike was one of the maddest enterprises that the miners of the County have ever undertaken. A strike is always a national disaster, inasmuch as it drives away trade that will never return, but the miners of Durham embarked upon this particular strike without the least preparation for it, with the result that they were starved into submission after thirteen weeks of terrible suffering. Every industry was paralysed. The Managers of the Tudhoe Ironworks had accumulated a vast store of coal for their blast furnaces, and week after week they held on pluckily, while everywhere else in the county the blast



THE ROLLS OF THE COGGING MILL.

furnaces were being damped down. At last, however, their store became exhausted, and blank despair settled upon the entire district. Generally speaking the miners are not a provident class; they spend their money freely, and trust to their union in times of scarcity, knowing that their houses are secured to them, and that the funds of the union will always keep life in them. But bread and water diet comes strangely to men who have never been accustomed to deny themselves even the luxuries of life, and it is something to be said for Spennymoor, that in spite of the terrible suffering of those three months there was no disorder in the place; in fact, it was so quiet that constables were actually drafted away from the district to places where their services were urgently needed. This remarkable result was aided to a great extent by a somewhat singular departure in the Institute at Tudhoe Grange. The Vicar of St. Andrew's threw open its doors to the men who gathered in the shadow of it, and they crowded in until the place was packed almost to suffocation. Night after night for several weeks the building was filled with men, and night after night an entertainment was provided for them of the most varied description. Ladies and gentlemen came from a distance to contribute their services, and took their places in the impromptu programme side by side with public-house vocalists and dancers. Dra-

matic and minstrel entertainments were given by capable companies of amateurs, and Sundays were provided for by an exhibition of lantern slides and addresses from clergymen and laymen of various denominations. Those who assisted at these queer entertainments will never forget them. The men were supplied with roasted potatoes at a moderate charge, and the receipts from this and other sources were the commencement of a small relief fund that proved of much service in the worst days of the strike.

Whilst the strike was proceeding the managers of the Tudhoe Ironworks were embarking upon a policy that is destined to leave its mark upon Spennymoor in the years to come; to what extent no mortal can tell. The machinery of the Ironworks was fast becoming out of date, and Works in other districts, newly equipped with all the latest labour saving appliances, were taking away the orders. The general manager of the company, Mr. Henry William Hollis, an engineer of great ability who came to Spennymoor in 1890, was quick to grasp the situation, and at once commenced what is now destined to become an entire renovation of the machinery in the works. The first step was the great Cogging Mill, laid down in 1892, at present the most notable feature of the Tudhoe Ironworks, and during the past year the road to Mount Pleasant



HENRY WILLIAM HOLLIS.

has been diverted into the Barnfield Road in order that the Weardale Company might take in a large tract of land for their new mills. Foundations have been laid to an extraordinary depth, and the Weardale Company are now the proud possessors of the largest plate mill in Europe, if not in the world, a marvel of mechanical genius that will roll plates 13 feet wide. A few years ago six feet was an unusual width for a boiler plate, but the fashion has changed, and boiler ends that were formerly made in sections are now formed out of a single plate. The Weardale Company will for the future be able to roll steel plates up to two inches in thickness, and two pairs of shears, one of them with blades 16ft. 9in. long, have been set up to cut them to the required sizes. The Company have found by experience that the manufacturer who can roll the larger plates for a boiler is usually given the order for the narrower plates as well. The new machinery will give employment to a large number of hands, and there is every hope that work will now become constant, so that wages may be regular and better.

There are many new features in the recent improvements that are being watched with great interest by engineers. The gas producers have been built under a recent patent that renders it possible by an arrangement of water to clear out the ashes

without the admission of air, and the reheating furnaces within which the burning gas develops its enormous heating power are a further improvement, having been specially built to an ingenious design by Mr. Hollis that has earned the warmest approbation of the leading ironmasters of the country. Among the recent improvements in the works must be mentioned the marvellous iron fingers in the cogging mill, the hydraulic arrangements for lifting weights and opening furnace doors, the steam jets for removing the scale from the plates, and the bogies that carry the ingots to the plate mills. The fertile brain of the general manager is never at rest. Wherever there is the least need for an improvement, he is never contented until the problem has been overcome.

The Weardale Company have made a great stride forward during the last few years. In addition to their works at Tudhoe and Tow Law they raise over a million tons of coal per annum with a large quantity of ironstone, they quarry their own limestone, they manufacture a great quantity of pig iron, they make bricks, they make gas and supply it for general consumption, and they farm immense tracts of land. In round numbers there are 6,500 men directly dependent upon them, and the wages bill of the Company amounts to no less a sum than £12,000 every fortnight.



THE GREAT PLATE MILL.

THE AMALGAMATION.



WHILST the ironworks have been improving the town has also made progress. The Spennymoor Local Board established a fire brigade, purchased land for a Board yard, improved the Board room, completed the making and paving of the Spennymoor streets, closed a number of unsanitary houses, and forced upon the owners of property a number of reforms in ashpits and drains, and finally in 1891 they embarked upon an extensive scheme of sewage disposal.

The people of Tudhoe Grange looked on in utter dismay at these proceedings. On their own side of the Jordan, the streets were a quagmire, the footpaths were impassable in the winter time, several of the houses were dilapidated and in many cases quite unfit for habitation, and the drains and middens were deplorable. At last they became utterly ashamed and asked to be taken into partnership. Spennymoor was not unwilling for the partnership but protested that Tudhoe Grange ought first to

put her own house in order. But local authorities cannot always have their own way now that they are under the eagle eye of the County Council, and Tudhoe Grange appealed unto Cæsar. Fortunately for Tudhoe Grange its representative on the County Council was Mr. George Henry Wraith, the lieutenant of Mr. Hollis in the management of the Weardale Company, who pay the bulk of the rates on the Tudhoe side of the Jordan, and he pleaded the cause of Tudhoe Grange with such masterly ability in the subsequent public enquiry that, in spite of the learned Counsel hired by Spennymoor to cross-examine him, his facts and figures were unassailable, and Spennymoor was compelled to consent to the amalgamation on the understanding that the added area should be rated separately until its condition should justify a common rate over the entire district, also that £2,000 should be charged upon the added area as its contribution to the Board yard, the fire brigade, the Board room, the park, and other assets of the Local Board. The amalgamation order was duly confirmed by the Local Government Board, and in December 1894 an Urban Council of twenty-one members was elected for the enlarged district.

Mr. Wraith was elected to the chair by the unanimous vote of the Council, and his services were so much appreciated that he was asked to

undertake a second term of office. Under the Parish Councils Act of 1894, he became an ex-officio magistrate for the County, and he has lately been elected by the County Council to the Aldermanic bench in compliment to his distinguished services to the County, mainly as Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee. Under his wise rule the Urban Council have done their work in entire harmony, and the results are already manifest in the greatly improved highways, the efficient drains, and the new streets and footpaths. Tudhoe Grange, the accursed, is now hardly to be recognised in her new garb of cleanliness and comfort, and judging by the rate of progression in the past, it cannot be long before she will claim to be relieved from the indignity of separate rating. It is now acknowledged by Spennymoor that the amalgamation has been a great blessing to the district, but the tradesmen of Spennymoor look with jealous eyes at the improvements in Tudhoe Grange, for a good deal of the trade of Spennymoor has already crossed the Jordan, and the present railway bridge is an impregnable barrier to the extension of the business portion of the town in the other direction. Mr. Thomas Black, the manager of the Tudhoe Ironworks, is now the Chairman of the Urban Council. He is a fitting successor to Mr. Wraith, for it was owing to his perseverance and commanding ability

that the Local Board of Spennymoor were stimulated to a good deal of the activity that marked their proceedings in the later years of the Board's existence. There is still much to be done in the town to make it an ideal place to live in. The houses in some of the streets are scarcely fit for pigs to herd in, much less for human beings, and these must be rendered habitable. Then there are the untrapped drains, the worthless pipes, the polluted streams, the hateful midden system—the source of so much disease and death, the great problem of sewage disposal for the added area; all these matters must have attention. The infant mortality of the district is another terrible fact to be accounted for, and the time has come for the Spennymoor Ward to provide itself with a burial ground, for St. Paul's Churchyard is already filled almost to overflowing.


The social needs of the people must also come in for attention. Sober citizens make the best workmen, and it is therefore to the interest of the community to make its citizens sober. Something must be done in the way of clubs and institutes, but first must come the pioneers of all social reform, the library, the gymnasium and the bath. It is a standing disgrace to Spennymoor that a free library has not long since been established in the town. The cost of it to the ratepayers would be infinitesimal,

and the benefits to be gained from it are so manifold that the expense, if once resolved upon, would never be begrudged, not even by the noisiest ratepayer in the district. The work of secondary education is also a matter that calls for immediate attention. The social progress of the town will depend mainly upon the children now in attendance at the elementary schools, and no matter what may be the cost, the standard of education must advance.

The town should have its own Petty Sessional and County Courts, and there is urgent need for a Nursing Association, in fact there are plenty of openings for a good deal of the charity that now goes out of the place. Singular to say the Urban District, with its 20,000 inhabitants, possesses not one single charitable institution.

Who can say what is to be the future of Spennymoor! The Weardale Iron Company have embarked upon a policy from which they cannot now draw back. The town must inevitably grow, and its future will depend upon the quality of its work. So long as Weardale steel keeps up its present reputation there will always be a demand for it, and the best that the rulers of the town can do for the future prosperity of the district is to turn out capable, honest, healthy, and sober workmen.

NOTABLE PERSONS.

PART from the great families of the neighbourhood, Spennymoor has in its time housed quite a number of remarkable men, and it is the business of this chapter to chronicle their achievements. Some of them have attained a world-wide fame, others are simply of local note, but all will be remembered in the locality for many a year to come. Of Charles Waterton, Dr. Lingard, and the Rev. J. H. Blunt, sufficient mention has already been made in connection with Tudhoe. Another author, of some note in his day, who belonged to the locality was William Wright, a London publisher. He was born at Whitworth in an old house that formerly stood close to the churchyard, and one of his publications was Raphael's Prophetic Almanac, an annual that still survives, and is in great repute with the farmers of this county. The house where he was born was demolished some years ago in order to improve the entrance to Whitworth Hall.

Then there was Robert Surtees, of Mainsforth,

whose history of the county is not merely unique for its thoroughness and accuracy, but will live for all time as one of the purest examples of English literature that we possess. The first volume was published in 1816, the second in 1820, the third in 1823, and the last in 1840. He was full of a quiet humour that made him beloved by all who knew him. One of the many anecdotes that are told of him is of peculiarly local interest. He once went to Lord Cornwallis, then Dean of Durham, to ask him what he would give towards replacing a cow that had been lost by Solomon Grisedale, the curate of Church Merrington, who was very poor, and had a numerous family to support. "Give!" said his lordship, "why a cow to be sure. Go, Mr. Surtees, to Woodifield, my steward, and tell him to give you as much money as will buy the best cow you can find." Mr. Surtees, who had not expected above a five pound note at most, exclaimed "My Lord, I hope you'll ride to Heaven on the back of that cow." A while afterwards he was saluted in the College at Durham by Lord Barrington with "Surtees, what is the absurd speech I hear you have been making to the Dean?" "I see nothing absurd in it" was the reply. "When the Dean rides to Heaven on the back of that cow, many of you prebendaries will be glad to lay hold of her tail."

Solomon Grisedale appears to have been pur-

sued by his unfortunate destiny right up to the end of his days. He finished by committing suicide, and the stains of his blood can still be discerned on the floor of the old vicarage at Merrington.

Another great man who once lived within a few miles of Spennymoor was John Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon, Lord High Chancellor of England. He ran away with Elizabeth Surtees, the daughter of a Newcastle banker, when he was only 21 years of age, and married her in Scotland. He set to work to study law, and afterwards began to practice as a barrister in Newcastle, but a leading lawyer in the City advised him to go to London. "Only go," he said, "and I'll give you a guinea now, on condition that you give me a thousand when you're Chancellor." The guinea was handed over, and in 1801, twenty-five years later, the forfeit was claimed. At the coronation of George IV. he was made Earl of Eldon, and in 1838 he died, having made for himself one of the greatest names of the century. Eldon is a little village on the road from Spennymoor to Shildon. The estate was purchased by Lord Eldon in 1785, and has continued in his family ever since.

Of men who have lived in the town for a lifetime the one who will be longest remembered was the late Dr. John Christopher O'Hanlon. He practised as a surgeon in Tudhoe Grange for a quarter

of a century, and at the time of his death in 1896 he held all the important medical appointments of the district. As a surgeon he was wonderfully skilful, and the men who came under his knife had the greatest confidence in him. He kept himself abreast of all the medical knowledge of the time, and if he had lived in London instead of in Spennymoor he might have become one of the first physicians of the country. He possessed an indomitable will. A story is told of him that when first he came to the town he tried to ride a horse under the old wooden railway bridge. The horse was frightened, and refused to budge. The doctor stuck to him for a quarter of an hour, determined to be master, and a crowd assembled, and followed the proceedings with great interest. Then the horse laid itself down in the road, and everyone thought the doctor was outwitted. But the doctor stuck to him like one of his own leeches, and sat in the saddle until the stubborn animal was conquered. At last the horse sprang up with the doctor in the saddle, and cantered away as though nothing had happened. Dr. O'Hanlon was a kindly and generous man, and his death came as a great shock to the public. The procession at his burial was of great length, and almost the whole of Spennymoor turned out to do honour to his memory.

His predecessor in the public appointments, Dr. Heffernan, will also be remembered in Spenny-

moor for many a year to come, but mainly because the notorious Mary Ann Cotton was for a time his housekeeper. He had reason to suspect that she was trying experiments upon him with his own drugs, and fortunately dismissed her. She then removed to West Auckland and ended her remarkable career upon the gallows. There are persons living in Spennymoor who remember her perfectly well, and shudder when they think of the meals prepared for them by this infamous woman when they dined at Dr. Heffernan's house. Whilst she was awaiting execution she gave birth to a girl. The child grew up to womanhood, and is now living not far from Spennymoor.

Another of the medical men who formerly practised in the town was the late Robert McFarlane of Byers Green. When first he came to Byers Green he was out at elbows and very poor, in fact he was compelled to lodge at a pitman's cottage. He was a pithy, sharp, little fellow, and spared himself no trouble with his patients. No matter how much the river was in flood he would cross it to go to Page Bank if his services were needed there, and many a time his pony had to swim across the ford. In a marvellously short period he was able to set up a trap, and then he removed to the Old Hall, where he succeeded in establishing an immense practice, and became the medical attendant of all the great

families for miles around. His brothers, David and Peter, occupied the Home Farm on the Whitworth Estate, and he himself farmed all the land between Byers Green and Whitworth. He met with his death under painful circumstances. Mr. Adamson, when landlord of the Wheatsheaf, had a stable on the opposite side of the road, and one night as he was crossing to it with a lantern, the light alarmed Dr. McFarlane's horse, and the doctor was thrown out of his trap against some railings which then adjoined the Railway Bridge. Mr. Stratton was with him, and escaped injury, but the doctor was killed. He was only 38 years of age, but the epitaph to his memory at Whitworth shows how greatly he must have been esteemed. It reads: "This monument is erected as a token of affectionate regard by several of his friends and neighbours who witnessed and experienced the able, unwearied, and benevolent discharge of his professional duties, and deeply mourn his sudden death."

The Old Hall at Byers Green is not the Old Park Hall, but the dilapidated old building at the bottom of the village where the footpath from Whitworth enters the roadway. It is the property of the Trotters, and was at one time occupied by an eccentric member of the family who wished to be buried in his stable yard where his horses could walk over his grave. The wish was fulfilled, and

a stone was duly inscribed to cover the spot, but some years later, when Mr. Stratton was repairing a cottage on the other side of the roadway and needed some material to fill up a window-space, his economical eye fell on the ancient tombstone, and he had it cut to fit the opening, and there it stands to this day, with part of the inscription still visible.

Another man of considerable though unrecognised genius who lived for many years at Spennymoor was the late Thomas John Bungay, an ornithologist and a skilful artist. As a boy he sang in the choir of the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, and often spoke of the Royal personages he had seen there during the reign of George IV., including our Queen, at that time a girl in her teens. He commenced to sketch when he was eight years of age, and developed a marvellous facility for water-colour work, his sketches being charmingly natural. He was formerly station master of the old Durham Station, on the road from Durham to Rainton, and came to Spennymoor as a clerk under the Wear-dale Company, in 1855. He died in 1884.

Of the poets, there are few that Spennymoor can boast about. The most remarkable of them is perhaps Mr. James Thompson Hedley. His rhymes are unrivalled for the originality of their construction, and the ideas he disseminates by them. It is his

proud privilege to have established a flourishing business by his own industry and thrift, and day after day for nearly forty years he has walked from Durham in all weathers, carrying his basket on his arm. His genial face has been familiar to three generations, and, although he has now passed his three score years and ten, it is to be hoped that he may yet be spared in these degenerate days of railway travelling to show another generation that an old man is not above walking a matter of fourteen miles after he has become rich enough to take the train. Mr. Hedley has published two or three pamphlets, one of them being a rhyming account of his journeys to Spennymoor.

Mr. Hedley is not the only poet that Spennymoor can lay claim to. There is at present a man living in Spennymoor who is a poet, not of the first rank, or even of the second rank, but a poet notwithstanding, and one who might fairly have stood in the second or even the first rank of the poets had nature gifted him with a better education. Edward Boyle is a native of Paisley. He commenced to write poetry at the early age of eleven, and shortly afterwards his writings got into print. He is now getting on in years, but for half-a-century or more he has poured forth poem after poem, and there is scarcely a house for miles round that does not contain one of his broadsheets, carefully folded away as too good to be

lost. He is a Liberal to the backbone, and his poems are the crytallization of Liberal principles. Each line he pens is a marvel of compressed journalism, the entirety of a leading article boiled down into a single sentence. He troubles not himself with mediæval legends or songs of love; his poems are written for the poor, and burn with the cry for liberty and human sympathy. Yet on a pinch he can write a Royal ode as well as Mr. Alfred Austin could do it, and when an election is pending he can throw off verse after verse filled with brilliant sarcasm, verses at times that Burns would not have been ashamed to sign his name to. But it is in a political meeting that he shines. Woe betide the Tory orator who has Edward Boyle in his audience! Just as he makes his pet point of the evening, it is turned to ridicule by two or three words from the Spennymoor poet, a brilliant shaft that goes straight home, to the infinite delight of the Liberal portion of the audience. It is useless to argue with him; this only gives him the opportunity he longs for, and whether his arguments are sound or otherwise, they are delivered with such a fund of wit and with such telling force that no ordinary mortal can stand up against him.

Edward Boyle is a shoemaker to trade, but it is many years since he sat at the bench. He travels from town to town selling his own poems in the

market place, and is better known in the locality as "Cheap John" than by his own name. He sells his poems without profit, he speaks for no fee, he writes for the papers without pay, and he is a poor man. But he is a true poet, and he has genius, and those who buy his poems would do well to bear this in mind. Poets must live, be they ever so improvident, and Edward Boyle must never be neglected by his townsmen.

In its earlier years Spennymoor possessed a number of queer characters, but the only one who ever attained to more than local notoriety was Tommy Williamson, the weather prophet. For many years he hired himself out to a farmer in Merrington, and at one period he was employed in a menial capacity at the Spennymoor railway station, but the latter part of his life was spent in Darlington. His prophecies usually appeared in the newspapers several weeks in advance, and were charmingly unreliable, but he sometimes succeeded in scoring a fine day for the Shildon Flower Show, and this was an abundant atonement for any number of errors. Tommy was no fool; he was fond of notoriety, and found that buffoonery was the shortest road to distinction. Accordingly, when the wags of Darlington ennobled him, he quietly entered into the spirit of the farce, and for ever afterwards signed himself "Lord" Thomas Williamson. Later on he made

R

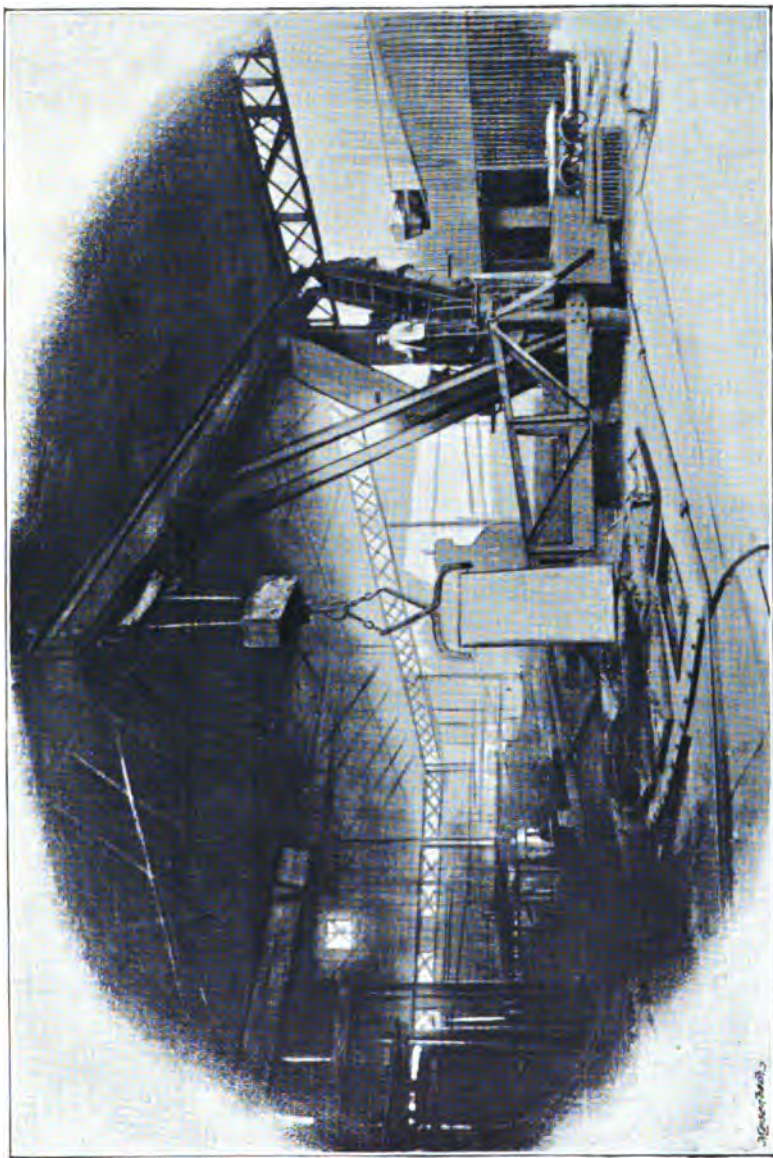
an application to the magistrates that after death he might be officially stuffed, and set up in a glass case for the admiration of the people of Darlington. The petition was one of the funniest pieces of fooling that has ever appeared in the local press, but of course it was far too witty to have been written by the old man himself.

This book would not be complete without a kindly mention of one who, though in no way remarkable, has been a conspicuous figure in the streets of Spennymoor for many years past. Nobody can guess the age of Billy Hindmarch. He has always been the same even in the childhood of men with children growing up around them, the slight boyish figure, the brown and shrivelled face, the single prominent tooth, the dropped jaw, and the funny walk. He is a staunch teetotaller, as can be seen by his clean blue ribbon, and he is always tidy and well cared for. He follows in the ranks of the Christian Mission and it gives him intense pleasure to be allowed to give his testimony with the rest. He never forgets those who are kind to him; his friendliness is inconvenient at times, but it lasts for ever, and when a friend of Billy's dies he follows in his best clothes at the end of the funeral procession. He is now in his 43rd year, and somewhat delicate in health, but will probably live to follow most of his friends to the grave.

THE SIGHTS OF SPENNYMOOR.

BEGINNING at the Ironworks we must make our way first to the office, where Mr. Black will find us a guide. We then go to the blast furnaces to see the process of tapping. We climb on to the platform where the sand is laid out in a multitude of yellow ridges, and suddenly there bursts from the mouth of the furnace a river of molten metal that hisses and spits and wriggles like so many serpents along the moulds of sand, until all are filled. As soon as the iron is cool the "pigs" are taken from the sand, and the bed is prepared for another tapping. We follow some of the "pigs" into the steel works, where men are moving about in the scantiest apology for clothing, masked with spectacles of blue glass, and wet with trickling beads of perspiration. They are throwing lumps of pig iron and pieces of steel into an enormous oven where the light is so brilliant that we dare not follow the metal with our eyes. The men furnish us with spectacles, and then we can see the metal seething in the furnace. A quantity of

Spanish ore (oxide of iron) is thrown amongst it, and the metal hisses and boils and splashes as though it were boiling water. One of the furnaces being ready for tapping, we are conducted to the spot, but speedily beat a retreat, for directly the metal is released our faces tingle with a scorching pain. Now comes a scene of dazzling splendour. There is a soft hiss, and a snaky stream of metal seethes down a short incline and dashes into a deep ladle. The volume of fluid, white as the electric light, bursts into a myriad sparks that dance in the air for all the world like a brilliant display of fireworks. Gradually the vessel fills, and then another cascade falls from the brim into the vessel beneath, this being the slag or refuse. Some ferro-manganese is thrown into the cauldron, and the mass of golden liquid sends out vapours that rival the colours of the rainbow in variety and splendour when seen through the coloured glass. Presently a plug is removed from the bottom of the ladle and a stream of pure metal flows into a great mould. We wait awhile to give the contents of the mould time to cool, and directly it has become an ingot the giant claws of a crane pounce down upon it and carry it into the air. An iron plate, over which we have just been walking, glides silently away, revealing an awful gulf, from which flame bursts out as from a lake of fire. The ingot is lowered into the furnace, and by-and-bye

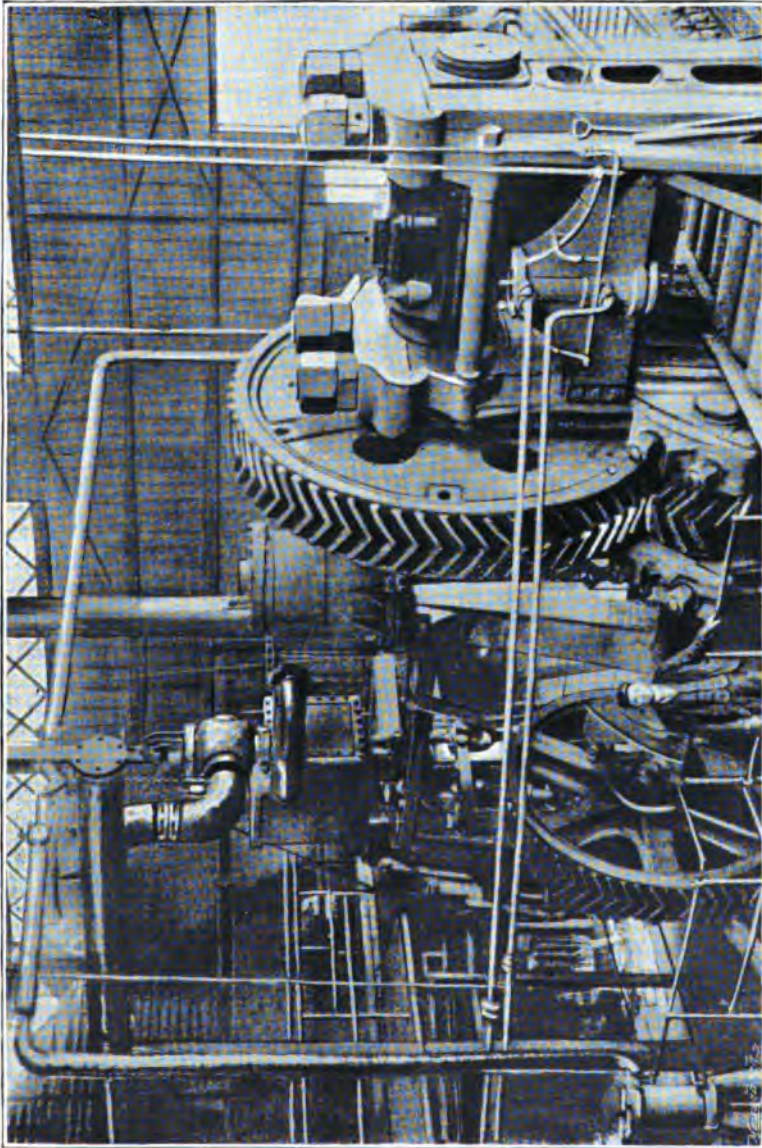


LIFTING AN INGOT FROM THE FURNACE.

comes back again, heated to a brilliant whiteness. The crane deposits its burden upon the rollers, and in a moment these are all in motion. It runs along as by magic until it comes to the rolls. We wonder if it will reach them in the right position, when suddenly a pair of giant arms rise up from below, and push it into its place. It passes to and fro through the mighty rolls, lengthening with each squeeze as a piece of putty might do in a glazier's fingers, and once again those wonderful iron arms rise up and lift it on to its side to be rolled into the square. Another touch of the lever in the cabin overhead, and the live rolls are again in motion. The ingot has been squeezed until it is now a great deal thinner and many feet longer than when it first emerged from the furnace. It is carried then to the shears, an iron hand grasps it to prevent it from jumping, and the knife cuts through it as though it were a piece of cheese. The slabs glide away as they are cut, and take their places each upon an iron bogie. From here a section is carried to another furnace, the doors open to receive it, and for a time it is lost to view. By-and-bye, a boy touches a lever, the furnace doors glide away, and the slab is tipped by a wonderful contrivance just on the spot where it is wanted to be. It is now about eight inches thick, yet in the space of four minutes and a half it emerges from the rolls a

long, smooth plate of steel only half an inch thick. The plate is carried to the shears, and the solid mass of cold steel is cut and trimmed by an enormous pair of scissors. A slice of the plate is next taken to the testing-house, and fastened into a machine that can pull with the greatest possible strain that ever a plate could have to bear. Suddenly it snaps with a report like that of a cannon, and the strength of the strain is marked upon the test piece, and upon the corresponding plate. The plate is now loaded into the wagons upon the railway, and the chips are carried away to be heated afresh and hammered into billets for the bar mills, or remelted in the steel furnaces. We follow some of them, and watch the Nasmyth hammer, striking tenderly at first until the billet is ready for its full power, and then down it comes, in a succession of terrific blows until the steel is welded tightly together.

From here we pass into the bar mills where thin billets and rods of metal are twisting and wriggling through the rolls, and writhing upon the iron floor as the boys pull them into shape. In one place pieces of red hot iron are being sawn through by a circular saw, in others the newly made bars are being cut by the shears to their proper lengths. Men are lifting huge plates from the floor and letting them fall with a deafening crash, and the entire scene is like a vast Pandemonium. It is a relief to be out



THE SHEARS OF THE COGGING MILL.

again into the open air, away from the noise and apparent confusion. But we have not yet done with the Ironworks. There are still the sheet mills to be seen, and after that the foundry where the men are shaping the black sand into wonderful moulds for the castings, and in other parts of the enclosure are the fitting shops, the pattern makers, the engine houses, the blacksmiths', and a dozen other places dedicated to different trades essential to the establishment. Then mounting one of the slag bogies the little engine carries us as one of its passengers right along to the slag heap and we watch the golden balls of slag as they roll down the banks into the fields below. Finally the engine takes us to the summit of the "Mountains of Spennymoor"—mountains formed by the hands of men within the memory of men now living—and then back again to the offices where we thank Mr. Black for his courtesy in allowing us to see the grandest sight that Spennymoor can boast of possessing.

To a stranger entering the town for the first time, it must be difficult to believe that a place so prosaic can contain anything, other than the Ironworks, worthy of the name of an attraction. Nevertheless, for those who can appreciate woods and hills, and beautiful scenery and sights of appalling grandeur, the neighbourhood is rich in interest. The town itself is commonplace enough,

but behind some of its dirtiest streets is the pretty little park, with its lake and swans and bandstand, and a playground for the children; not much of a park, but one that many a greater town would be proud to possess.

For some too, the collieries even possess their charms; the silent descent into the bowels of the earth, and the long journeys underground with bent back, and extremes of heat and draught. For those who like the country, there are charming walks through Tudhoe Wood to the pretty little village of Tudhoe, and on from there to the river by Partnerships or the Stepping Stones, and then back by Glaxburn Wood or by Whitworth Lane into the town. Then by walking to Croxdale you can reach some of the loveliest woodland scenery to be found in the County of Durham, the charming avenue to Croxdale Hall, the walk cut in the rock with a dark and deep ravine a hundred feet below, the woods of Beautrove, carpeted with primroses and bluebells, the pool where the rushes grow, and the fir tree woods of High Butterby, with paths that wind like a maze and end by the river side. You can go by this road through the quaint old village of Shincliffe into Durham, or you can leave the highway on Farewell Hall bank, and follow the line of the cliffs overhanging the river, which at this point runs upon a solid pavement

of rock, affording many a spot for a luxurious bathe. Or you can travel in the other direction to Auckland Park, the noblest in the county, taking the path by the railway to Byers Green Station, and then across the fields and through lovely Bellburn. Then there is Whitworth Lane just outside the town, and the churchyard at Whitworth, one of the peacefullest spots on earth. Crossing the bridge at Page Bank, you can follow the path by the river side to the Brancepeth ford, and then taking the road up the hill, you come to Brancepeth Castle. Then in the other direction altogether there is Windlestone Hall with its mausoleum, and grounds that are a picture to see, and the old posting inn at Rushyford, and the quiet old village of Ferryhill with its ancient Manor House and the gate of its orchard preaching to all passers-by its sweet lesson of contentment :—

How happily seated those Larës are,
Who feed on Prospect and Fresh Air,
Dine moderately every Day,
And Walk their Supper time away.

Then returning along the ridge to Merrington you can call at the Rectory for the key of the tower, the ancient landmark that mingles in the landscape from every surrounding point, and after examining the queer grotesques all round the building, and the ancient grave covers in the chancel, you climb the winding stair, and view the prospect.

To the north there are the parallel lines of heights rising across the Wear, with the river valley in the foreground, the huge white towers and bastions of Brancepeth, and Durham on her seven hills garlanded with woods, and beyond these to the eastward the lofty summits of Penshaw and Wardon-law rising on the horizon. Southward the view extends unbounded by any nearer barrier than the Yorkshire hills. A hundred villages and farmholds are scattered over the foreground, the western horizon is formed by the dusky heights above Barningham, the level plain of Thirsk stretches to the south, and far away in the distance may even be discerned with a glass the towers of the Minster at York, while the prospect on the east is only bounded by the estuary of the Tees, upon which the white sails of ships can be discerned dotted about over a wide expanse of sea. Happy the man who can appreciate beauties such as these. Spennymoor, its collieries, and its ironworks, with all their bustle and dirt and sordidness, vanish away; the air is pure and wholesome, the river, the waving trees, the green pastures, the brown arable lands, the woods, the teeming hills and dales send up a sweet fragrance, and the whole cultivated earth seems to thrill with the joy of living.

THE CHARITIES OF SPENNYMOOR.



OF all the men who have accumulated fortunes in the town, how many have given anything back? It is too terrible to dwell upon. The bulk of them are dead, and God alone can tell what has become of their sordid souls. All that remains to keep their memory green is a tombstone; sometimes not even this, for the heirs of greedy men are apt to be greedier still. There is so much to be done in the town for the moral, intellectual, and physical development of the people, that the absence of any organised charity belonging to the place is humiliating in the extreme. There have been plenty of gifts to churches and chapels, but something more than this is needed to fit children for citizenship. It is to be hoped that the rising generation may take this lesson seriously to heart, and learn before they become too old the art of generous giving.

Of the rich men of Spennymoor there is only

one whose name deserves to be written in letters of gold and this is the name of Charles Attwood. He was generous in his lifetime, and by his will he established a number of charities, one of them being allotted to Tudhoe. The annual value of it is £27 7s. 6d. and the money is given to the vicar of Tudhoe to be applied by him for the benefit of the poor in physical need. There are two other charities belonging to Tudhoe but they are scarcely worth mentioning. Brabant's Dole was instituted in 1612 for the benefit of the most aged and impotent poor of the parish, but only $\frac{4}{6}$ a year belongs to Tudhoe, and Dobbinson's charity dating from 1662, and likewise given to the poor, is supposed to realize $\frac{8}{7}$ for Tudhoe, although the only charity bearing the name of Dobbinson now known to Tudhoe is applied for the advancement of the education of the boys and girls attending Tudhoe Church of England Schools. Another small educational charity that once belonged to the village was Wilson's charity founded in 1746, under which an annual sum of 16/- was paid for teaching one or two poor boys to read, but it appears to have been lost, as also another charity of the same type, Brown's charity. The property from which the latter charity was derived is said to have passed into the hands of Mr. Salvin, and the last payment of which any trace can be found was made to Mr. John Lister.

It is as yet an unsettled question whether Spennymoor is or is not entitled to share in the charities of Merrington and Ferryhill, but the proportion that Spennymoor could by any possibility receive is so trifling that it is not worth troubling about. The Poor's land at Merrington brings in £14 a year, and Stokoe's charity realizes £8 8s. 8d. a year apiece for Merrington and Ferryhill. Another charity, known as Smith's charity also brings in a few pounds, and there are almshouses at Merrington founded out of money left by Ann Morgan and the Rev. Mr. Simons. Mr. Simon's charity also established five almshouses at Ferryhill and the village was further provided for by Biew's charity of £1 a year for ten poor widows and Buston's charity of 5/- a year, but there is little likelihood of any of the money ever coming to Spennymoor.

Whitworth possesses no endowed charities at all, nevertheless the Park at Spennymoor is a worthy memorial to the late Robert Duncombe Shafto, and whenever the people of Spennymoor are in any distress there is always an open purse for them at Whitworth Vicarage.

A NOTE AS TO PUBLIC FOOTPATHS.



FOOTPATHS become public by dedication of the landowner either express or implied. Dedication will be implied if the landowner has knowingly permitted the public for a very few years to make or use a path by trespass, and once the path has become a public path it can never lawfully be stopped, no matter how long it may have been disused by the public. The question of whether a landowner has or has not forfeited his rights in a path is a question of evidence. The fact that he has protested against the public user, either actively, by taking action in the courts, or locking or thorning gates, or passively, by notice boards or warnings, tells heavily against the public claim, but if it can be proved by the evidence of people advanced in years that the path was used as public long before the alleged acts of interference, the landowner's case will fall to the ground.

In footpath cases the public are generally in the

right, but the money at the disposal of the landowners, together with the tremendous local influences they are able to bring to bear upon men and women, (often their own tenants and employés), who would otherwise give evidence in support of the public claim, render it very difficult for the public to win. The local councils are the trustees of the public paths and, whether a path is or is not needed by the present generation, it is their bounden duty to preserve it for the generations to follow. Unfortunately the local councils are usually under the influence of the landowner, so that the duty of fighting these cases generally devolves upon some patriotic member of the community. It is better to be the defendant in a footpath case than the plaintiff, but it is a mistake for a man of means to put himself forward as the target to be shot at. The wiser course is to put forward a man with nothing to lose but his furniture and then to apply to the Court for an order *in forma pauperis*. This means that he is exempt from any fees of the Court, that a solicitor and counsel are assigned to him to fight the case for nothing, and that if he loses he will have nothing to speak of liable to seizure in respect of the costs, which often amount to hundreds of pounds. This is legitimate warfare, and if the public would only adopt these tactics, the landowners would find it cheaper to put a wire fence along both sides of a

public path than to go to law about it. These paths are nearly always of ancient origin, but whenever a locality becomes populous the landowner can only preserve his fields from damage and his woods for sport by closing them to the public. Nevertheless he has neither a legal nor a moral right to improve his estate at the public expense, and if on the one hand he complains of damage, he omits to consider that the public by their advent into the locality have raised the value of his property both agriculturally and for accommodation and building purposes, whilst in many cases the public have come for the express purpose of working his minerals, thereby increasing his income to an enormous extent. Consequently, if the public believe themselves to be in the right, no amount of litigation should prevent them from exercising their rights. Each decision that is given affects only the one individual, so that if the public will only stick to their guns the landowner would soon tire of warring against them.

It cannot be too widely known that no person can lawfully be fined at the police court for damage to pasture grass, bracken, or underwood, or taking mushrooms, roots, wild flowers, or herbs, (unless they are specially cultivated for profit), nor can any person lawfully be fined for mere trespass, or for wilful damage in order to remove obstructions from a path believed by him *bonâ-fide* to be a public path.

Printed by James Dodds, 33, Northgate, Darlington.

This book should be returned to the Library on or before the last date stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred by retaining it beyond the specified time.

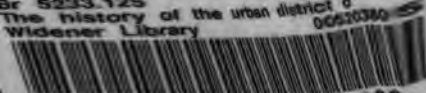
Please return promptly.

Dr 5233.125

The history of the urban district of

Widener Library

06520360



3 2044 081 228 660